

# St. Joseph Catholic Church

April 2, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ:

I wanted to touch base with all of you and it seemed that a letter would be the best way to do so; there are many folks who are not on social media or even the internet itself---but we all get mail. I am praying that each of you are doing as well as possible in these very strange and unsettling times: several times I've heard people use the word "surreal", and that's one of those words that gets used sometimes that we have a more feeling of than a definition---it means "having the disorienting, hallucinatory quality of a dream"---I'd say that fits, except this is definitely one from which I know we'd all like to wake up from. As one of the prayers used in the intercessions last week put it, we need to pray the Lord to change our "fear into faith and our panic into piety"---God's grace and our prayer-driven faith can do this!

**First of all;** a big THANK YOU to all those who've been able to so generously respond to our letter to the parish last week; let's all pray that such generosity may be able to continue, and that we as a parish may be given the grace from God to persevere---and the same goes for our diocese and the church in our country and beyond. In any event, again thanks and blessings!

**Secondly:** I know we all feel the pain and loss in not being able to worship the Lord publicly as we normally do. I know many---and I count myself among them---find this situation quite jarring and almost apocalyptic. At any rate, we must pray that the dust of this pandemic and the even more disturbing effects of it all settle as quickly as possible, in every area of life.

But while we pray and wait for this moment to end quickly and well, in the meantime we can foster a love and desire for Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Blessed Eucharist; by prayer and many acts(prayers) of faith, hope and charity. Please notice that a kind soul has placed wonderful prayer cards at both the main entrance of the church and the elevator entrance with the prayer to make a Spiritual Communion: the fact is that when someone is unable to physically receive the Eucharist---whether because it's impossible for them to be at Mass due to reasons beyond their control; or because they cannot receive Communion due to a serious need to go to confession; or because they have broken the fast before Communion; the very desire itself to receive Our Lord itself brings graces to us, graces that flow from Christ Himself in the Eucharist. Sadly, this practice just about died out altogether in the past 50 years: but recent turn of events has revived the practice. Also, we should all know and pray what's called an "act of perfect contrition"---when one cannot get to confession but still has the intention to do so as soon as possible; and truly desires to have the gift of being sorry for one's sins out of love for God, they can pray this "act of perfect contrition" and it does bring about a return to the state of grace, until one can get to confession.

**Speaking of which, I've scheduled confessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays 5-7PM, and again on Saturday 11-1PM; or if anyone wishes to go some other time they can always call the rectory 834-3697.**

**Please do not hesitate to request the anointing of the sick,** especially if going into the hospital, or if otherwise seriously ill or advanced in years. If someone needs the last rites, PLEASE CALL.

I'm not always allowed to enter the hospital at the present time like I normally would; one of our parishioners was at Boone and I was not allowed to enter. This dear soul made it home. Then this past Sunday the official chaplain there(a kindly Protestant minister) called me to anoint dear RJ Rentel---then I was allowed in, and was able to give him the last rites--may he rest in peace.

**Regarding funerals:** basically, we are only allowed to do a graveside service(with a small crowd of ten), and a memorial Mass at a future time.

**A final word about Holy Mass:** even though we are not allowed to have public Masses, a priest is allowed to offer Mass even when no one else is there: no Mass, strictly speaking, is "private" since it is an action of the whole Church, at which the angels and saints are present, and the souls in purgatory and we on earth are showered with the grace of Christ---as one wise priest and theologian said long ago, "each Mass is like a heartbeat of Sacred Heart of Jesus bringing His grace to the whole Church and the world." As the Code of Canon Law puts it, quoting a very ancient saying from long ago, *"Remembering always that in the mystery of the eucharistic sacrifice the work of redemption is exercised continually, priests are to celebrate frequently; indeed, daily celebration is recommended earnestly since, even if the faithful cannot be present, it is the act of Christ and the Church in which priests fulfill their principal function."* When you see the church lights on late at night, that's me, praying for us all, and each day offering the Sacrifice of the Mass for you all, for the Church and our country: it'll be great when we can all pray together in God's house once again---and for that we **all** must pray. The church will be open from around 8 AM till dark falls.

Thanks to Christine Wirths and Nichole for enabling us to get the Mass on Youtube---- for that we are grateful.

I know we are all praying not only for the sick, and for good health, but also for our country, that our economy(upon which people's lives depend) and our God-given rights, assured in the Constitution, and for which so many have suffered and died---will all be preserved for future generations.

This letter and any future ones will also be at [stjosephcougars.com](http://stjosephcougars.com)

May the dear Lord, through the intercession of the Blessed Mother and our holy patron St Joseph, be with us all, our nation, and the Church, in these troubled times so peace and serenity may return.

God bless

Fr Phil Kane

## **An Act of Spiritual Communion (Modern Translation)**

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

**one example of an act of perfect contrition**

**O MY GOD I AM HEARTILY SORRY AND BEG PARDON FOR ALL MY SINS; NOT SO MUCH BECAUSE THESE SINS BRING SUFFERING AND HELL TO ME, BUT BECAUSE THEY HAVE CRUCIFIED MY LOVING SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST AND OFFENDED THY INFINITE GOODNESS. I FIRMLY RESOLVE, WITH THE HELP OF THY GRACE, TO CONFESS MY SINS, TO DO PENANCE, AND TO AMEND MY LIFE. AMEN.**

P.S.: some kind soul gave us several boxes of blessed votive lights, for people to take one(or two perhaps) and use at home like the votive lights; you'll find them in the front pew in front of St Joseph;s statue in church

Also, near the stainless steel holy water container(under Fr Schuster's memorial)and on that window sill closest to it, you find bottles of holy water---please feel free to take one! When the holy water is blessed the prayers speak of the blessed salt sprinkled into as being " **a source of health for the minds and bodies of all who make use of it**"; and when the salt and water are blessed part of the prayer asks God to make this water and salt "**drive away evil spirits and dispel sickness, so that every-thing in the homes and other buildings of the faithful that is sprinkled with this water may be rid of all uncleanness and freed from every harm. Let no breath of infection, no disease-bearing air, remain in these places. May the wiles of the lurking Enemy prove of no avail. Let whatever might menace the safety and peace of those who live here be put to flight by the sprinkling of this water, so that the healthfulness, obtained by calling upon Thy holy name, may be made secure against all attack...**" Holy water is a powerful sacramental against enemies of both body and soul, as we use it with faith and trust in God.