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April 12, 2020

A Message from Fr. Howard

Dear Brothers and Sisters in our Risen Lord,

There is a proverb, which, in its earliest version, has been attributed to the Roman poet Sextus Propertius, and it states the general truth that “absence makes the heart grow fonder.” Although this proverb has generally been quoted to express a feeling of great affection between friends or lovers who are kept apart, this proverb is apropos to our particular situation of separation from the public celebration of the sacraments, and most especially from receiving our beloved Jesus Christ in Sacramental Communion, especially during Holy Week and on Easter Sunday. And, while I certainly would never underestimate the disappointment and the sadness of the faithful not participating in the public celebration of the sacraments, for it pains me greatly as well, I do believe that it is important to remember that God is indeed with us during these times.

In his homily for the Mass of Christian Burial for Archbishop Pilarczyk on March 27th of this year, Archbishop Schnurr recalled how Archbishop Pilarczyk had suffered health challenges for many years, and, as such, physical pain was no stranger to him. And, when he had received bad news from his medical doctors regarding a progressively worse medical condition, Archbishop Pilarczyk reacted to the bad news in the same way that he had throughout his ministry as the Archbishop of Cincinnati whenever he faced trials. He said, “The Lord is in this somewhere.”

My dear brothers and sister, the Lord is in this somewhere for us as well. Our Blessed Lord is walking with us during this trial. Indeed, we are in the midst of some regrettable circumstances. However, we must patiently remember that these circumstances are temporary, and that they can indeed provide us with a special spiritual opportunity to more fervently long for a return to that which we have been temporarily deprived, namely receiving the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Eucharist.

Indeed, some studies have taught that absence truly does make the heart grow fonder, especially when it comes to issues of intimacy. To such an extent, these current circumstances can produce great spiritual benefits for us by helping us to grow in our intimacy with Jesus Christ and to renew our joy in, and our gratitude for, the gift of his Real Presence (body, blood, soul, and divinity) in Sacramental Communion at the Holy Mass, especially when we return to our public celebrations. I pray that this will be very soon.

During these challenging times, I continue to pray for you, and to offer Mass for you, on a daily basis, and I ask for your continued prayers for me and for each other as well. And, with this column, I offer you my Easter blessings!

In the meantime, as we enter into the joyful season of Easter, let us recall, and rejoice in, the Resurrection of our Lord as expressed so beautifully in the *Regina caeli*:

Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia.
For He whom you did merit to bear, alleluia.
Has risen, as he said, alleluia.
Pray for us to God, alleluia.
Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia.
For the Lord has truly risen, alleluia.

Let us pray. O God, who gave joy to the world through the resurrection of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, grant we beseech Thee, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may obtain the joys of everlasting life. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Happy Easter,

Fr. Howard



over

Spiritual Communion

(Since you are unable to receive Holy Communion during this time, you can make this Prayer of Spiritual Communion, a source of grace in the midst of difficulty.)

**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.**



You can livestream Mass (closed door)

**from the Cathedral of St. Peter-in-Chains on the Internet daily by going to
www.stpeterinchainscathedral.org**

scroll down to

Live-streamed Mass Schedule

(Mass is streamed live Monday-Saturday at 8 a.m. and Sunday at 11 a.m. or watch anytime.)

Inspiring Products from THE CATHOLIC TELEGRAPH

Subscribe to **The Daily Divina**, a beautiful way to start each day focused on praying with God's word, and **The Ember**, a weekly email with relevant, local, and inspiring content that will keep you up to date on news that matters and help you connect your faith to daily life. Both are free and sent to your email inbox. Sign up at www.thecatholictelegraph.com/digital-subscriptions.

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Bringing the Faith Home

With kids out of school and public Masses and religious education classes temporarily suspended, parents may feel cut off or overwhelmed with how to teach and share the beauty and joy of the Catholic faith. To help with this, the staff of *The Catholic Telegraph* has identified 7 fun resources to help parents and children learn and live their faith at home. Find these at <https://bit.ly/CTFaithHome>.

The Catholic Bishops of Ohio have extended the temporary suspension of all publicly celebrated Masses/liturgies at least through and including Sunday, May 3. The Bishops of Ohio dispense the Catholic faithful who reside in their respective dioceses and all other Catholics currently in Ohio from the obligation of attending Sunday Mass during this period.

Baptism for Ben Kurt Unrast, son of William and Amber Unrast, will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 18 at St. Louis Church. Congratulations to the family!

VIRTUS has a new bulletin for those who have to stay current for the protection of our children. Thanks!

Annual clean up of St. Louis Cemetery will be on Monday, April 20. Anything not attached to the footer will be subject to removal by the Cemetery Board.

Easter Flowers: Since we do not know when we will be permitted to resume the celebration of public liturgies, all orders for Easter flowers have been cancelled. If you made a donation for the purchase of Easter flowers and you would like your donation to be returned, please call or email the Parish Office and your donation will be returned to you.

Confessions: At this time Father Howard will be hearing confessions Thursday evenings at St. Louis Church beginning at 7 p.m. and on Saturday mornings at St. Nicholas Church from 9-9:30 p.m., or by appointment.

Are you celebrating a significant wedding anniversary in 2020? 25, 40, 50, 60, 65, 70, or 75 years...Go online to <http://www.catholiccincinnati.org/ministries-offices/family-life/wedding-anniversary/> to request a certificate from the Archbishop by April 12. If you are married 50 years, the date of the Golden Anniversary Mass is August 1 at 4:30 p.m. at either St. Peter in Chains Cathedral, Cincinnati or at Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Dayton.

Century Farm Awards: Catholic Rural Life is seeking families who have farmed the same land for 100 years or more and are eligible for the award. Winners will be recognized at the Rural Urban Farm Mass on July 16. For more information, go to catholiccincinnati.org/ministries-offices/catholic-social-action/rural-life-ministry/. Applications are due by April 20.

Beware of Email Scams: Unfortunately, some people see this pandemic as an opportunity to take advantage of others. We have had multiple reports of fraudulent "phishing" emails, purportedly from the pastor of a parish, asking parishioners to urgently send money. Of course, close inspection of the email address reveals that the email is not actually from the pastor after all; however, in their haste to help, some parishioners do not look closely enough. Please warn your parishioners that any version of your email address other than the official one printed in your parish bulletin is not to be trusted.

Baptism & Beyond Class will be held Monday, June 22 at 7 p.m. in the St. Nicholas Church basement. All couples are to attend before baptism. Call 419-582-2531 to register.

CCD News

First Communion at our parishes is tentatively rescheduled for June.

May Crowning at our parishes is cancelled this year.

CCD classes are cancelled for the rest of the year.

Please call or email the office to register your child who is in kindergarten at the present time for first grade for next year.

Want to stream movies through your Internet service? FORMED has movies for your viewing pleasure that can also help you grow in your Catholic Faith. There are movies for kids and families. To register go to nsoregion.formed.org and sign up.

Thank you to those who are continuing their weekly contribution to our parishes!

Contributions

Since all public Masses and liturgies have been temporarily suspended, the question has arisen regarding how a person might continue to offer their gift of financial participation and support to our parishes, so that they, like every other household, can continue to meet their expenses.

For those members who would like to continue to financially participate in their support, Parish envelopes may be dropped off at the Osgood State Bank, in their night deposit at any time, or mailed to:
The Pastoral Center, P.O. Box 9, Osgood, Ohio 45351.