

St. Justin Martyr Catholic Church

My dear parishioners,

August 3, 2020

I hope this letter finds you and your family safe, in good health, and enduring these unsettling days with faith and hope. This historic COVID pandemic has required us all to make enormous sacrifices to protect the health of our community. I hope you and your family are adjusting to these circumstances and that you are experiencing the comfort of God's faithful presence every day.

Among the many ways this crisis has had an impact on all of us are the restrictions on attendance and the suspension of all church activities, including our gatherings after Masses and our regular prayer groups and community meetings. We continue to enjoy daily Masses at 9 a.m. every morning and Sunday at 8 a.m., 12 noon Vietnamese Mass, and 5 p.m. Spanish Mass. We are live streaming all our Masses on our web page sjm@simtx.org and our Facebook page. If you are unable to attend a Mass, I hope you are praying a prayer of spiritual communion often, and that you are comforted by the constant presence of our Lord, even when you cannot receive Him physically.

As you know, our operating budget relies on the revenue we receive in our weekly offertory collection. Without that, we are falling short of our budget. Since May, we have been operating on our reduced collection with the assistance of a PPP loan to pay our employees. This funding ends on August 1 and it is my concern for being able to pay our staff that prompts me to write to you. I'm asking everyone to either mail in your regular contribution for the month or go to our online giving at [sim@simtx.org](mailto:sjm@simtx.org) to sign up to begin regular electronic donations to the parish. Presently, our budget indicates that we are approximately \$6,000 short every week. My proposal is to reduce expenses by one third, take one third from our savings and the last third from increased donations. This will ensure that we can get through this crisis now, but will also help us have greater financial stability in the future. I cannot stress enough how important it is that you continue to support our parish if you can.

Our employees have agreed to reduce their hours to help us reduce expenses. Our priests, following the lead of the Archdiocese employees, will take a 15% reduction in salary. So, beginning August 3, our office hours will be 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday. We will not have night clerks in the evenings and our buildings will be closed until we are allowed to schedule events. We are examining other ways to reduce expenses without further curtailing our operation. Thank you for your prayers, your faithfulness, and your support. May the Lord bless and keep each of you during this challenging and historic time.

In Christ, your Pastor,



Rev. Paul Chovanec