

THIRD LETTER from the PASTOR – MARCH 25, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

In the words of Saint Paul, “*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*” (Eph. 1:2)

I pray that this letter finds each of you safe and healthy. It is hard to imagine that, as of this weekend, three Sundays will have gone by without public Mass in our beautiful Church. It is, however, gratifying to see the number of individuals who stop by the Church to pray the Rosary, the Stations of the Cross, or just sit quietly and bask in the peace and comfort of being in the *Real Presence* of the Lord reserved in the Tabernacle.

If you have not yet done so, please tune in to our Sunday and daily parish Masses. Also, pause during the day to pray the Rosary with us and to join in the Stations of the Cross which will be made available as of Friday, March 27th at www.staedan.org or our parish **Facebook** page. Please know that our posts are still a *work in progress* and that we are working hard to upgrade our technology so that we will soon be able to live stream all of our Masses and prayer services.

Besides our ongoing worries about the virus, I am very sorry to know that some of you are experiencing financial hardships at this time. I hope and pray that things change for the better soon. Please know that I am so deeply thankful to those of you whose *personal financial situation* allows you to keep sending in, or dropping off, your weekly contributions to our parish. We have even received a few very generous checks with little notes that say, “*to help make up for those who are unable to give at this time.*” I was very moved and I am so proud of you. Thanks also for keeping up with your **Renew & Rebuild** (the driveway/parking lot project will soon be upon us) and **Cardinal’s Stewardship Appeal** pledges. Please remember to sign up for the **WE SHARE** program [they had a website *login* glitch, but it has been resolved]. Just go to our web site - you cannot miss the big red/white logo. It is really easy and it is good for all of us as a parish community.

As of our March 24th directives from the Archdiocese, all parish office activity has been suspended until further notice. The *Church* may remain open for private visits, but no *public* Masses or services or group devotions are permitted. Individuals who pay a visit are urged to continue observing *proper social distancing*. All Funeral Masses, Wakes, Baptisms and Weddings are suspended until further notice. In an emergency, a priest may visit a dying person at home or in the hospital and administer the Sacrament of the Anointing and Holy Communion (Viaticum). Our St. Vincent DePaul **FOOD PANTRY** remains active and given the rising need we are still conducting our **Easter Food Drive**, as we do every year at this time. If your means allow it, then please join us by donating groceries at the Church or the Rectory vestibules. Please remember those **MITE BOXES** for Catholic Charities Community Services of Rockland (CCCSR). In this current situation these charitable outreaches can be a very tangible

part of our Lenten **ALMSGIVING**. So too, can be a visit to a **BLOOD BANK** to give a pint to help alleviate the current crisis caused by a suspension of all blood drives.

Our **PREP** families were notified that our program is continuing, but has, by necessity, transitioned to an online format. Our book publisher, *Sadlier Religion*, has provided us with digital resources, games and assessments for our families as well providing us with *eBooks*. These resources have been mailed to families to assist them.

Palm Sunday, April 5th, our Church will be decorated in RED. Those stopping by for a visit will be able to take home some **blessed Palm branches** from the displays we will have set up in the Church. Copies of the Scriptures, including the **Passion**, will be available to all who visit. We also invite those who visit to bring home some palm branches to family or neighbors. (Please use a gloved hand to transport and distribute the palm branches to others.) **Palm Sunday Mass**, including the reading of the Passion, will be available by tuning into **www.staedan.org** or **Facebook**.

Holy Thursday, April 9th, the Church will be decorated in WHITE and we will celebrate the **Mass of the Lord's Supper**. At this time, unless something changes, we plan to live stream the Mass to you at the original 7:30 pm time. Please join us.

Good Friday, April 10th, remains a day of **Fast and Abstinence** for Catholics. Our Church will be decorated in RED and our traditional Good Friday Service, focusing on the reading of the Passion, will be shown at the traditional time of **3 PM**. Later on, at **7:30 PM** you are invited to join in for the streaming of the **Solemn Stations of the Cross**, again featuring our own beautiful mosaic stations. Again, please join us.

Holy Saturday Easter Vigil Mass, April 11th the Church will be decorated in WHITE and (if our florist is allowed to deliver) our Sanctuary and Altar will be resplendent with flowers. We hope that many of you will tune in at **8 PM** and make this your Easter Mass. Again, we know that there will be many other televised Masses from the Vatican, the Cathedral, etc.; however, it would be nice to have as many of our Saint Aedan's parishioners and their families join in solidarity with one another by viewing the Mass with their own parish priests and deacon right here in their home town Church.

Always remember that **PRAYER**, is an important part of Lent. Please try your best to set aside some *quality* time each day to pray as *individuals* and as *families*. Be sure to pray with our young children and teenagers. Make time for prayers at the beginning and end of the day; before and after meals; read the scriptures; pray a decade of the Rosary or enjoy another special practice. Please pray for our President, our Government and Church leaders and, in a special way, for our First Responders and Health Care workers who are on the front lines. Prayer is essential for us to remain strong and spiritually healthy during these difficult and trying days and weeks which are unprecedented in our lifetimes. I will continue offering my Daily and Sunday Masses for all of you. I would be grateful if you would remember to pray for your Parish Priests and Deacon as well.

Finally, our Holy Father, Pope Francis, is inviting all Christians to join with him in prayer on Friday, March 27th at 1 PM EST. The prayer will consist in readings from the Scriptures, prayers of supplication, and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; and will conclude with Pope Francis giving the *Urbi et orbi* Blessing, with the possibility of gaining a plenary indulgence for all those who listen to it live through the various forms of communication. The blessing “Urbi et Orbi” (lat. to the City [of Rome] and to the World) is normally only given on Christmas and Easter. We will be offering our Parish Mass on Friday, in prayerful solidarity, with the Holy Father and our daily Rosary and the Stations of the Cross will also be made available to you at our website www.staedan.org or Facebook.

“May the Lord bless you and keep you, may He let his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May the Lord look upon you with kindness and grant you His peace.” (Numbers 6:24-26.)

Prayerfully in Christ,

Msgr. Emmet Nevin

Monsignor Emmet Nevin, Pastor

PS. When you wash your hands for those 20 seconds, forget about singing that boring Happy Birthday tune twice. Instead, pray the words to the *Our Father*, nice and slow and guess what, it comes out to 20 seconds. *Do you pray in the fast lane?* Add “For the kingdom and the power and the glory are Yours now and forever.” Teach this one to your kids!