

## PASTORAL LETTER 4 - FROM MSGR. EMMET NEVIN – APRIL 2, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

***“God is our refuge and our strength, an ever-present help in distress. (Psalm 46:1)***

During these very difficult times, as we all try our best to stay well and to help safeguard our loved ones, I pray that all of us will continue to turn ever more closely to God who is the ultimate source of our consolation and strength.

As we approach **Holy Week** and the celebration of some of the most solemn and beautiful observances of the Church year, I encourage all of you, to please share in the special liturgies which Father Ivan, Deacon Jim and I will be sending you from our own parish church. Although we may be physically apart from one another, may we all try to utilize these special programs as a way for us to share in solidarity and in *spiritual union* with one another in our mutual thoughts, prayers and love. <[Staedan.org](http://Staedan.org)> or **Facebook** or **YouTube**.

**PALM SUNDAY**, April 5th, our red linens and vestments will be displayed and we will privately celebrate our Palm Sunday Mass with the blessing of the palm branches and the reading of the Passion. Sadly, none of our Catholic churches will be allowed to distribute palm branches this Palm Sunday. Instead, parishes will make every attempt to save the branches for distribution at a later feast day such as *Corpus Christi*, June 14<sup>th</sup>.

**HOLY THURSDAY**, April 9<sup>th</sup>, the church will be decorated in white with some flower arrangements placed around the altar. **Tenebre** - *Morning Prayer of the Church* with the Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet and candle ceremony will be prayed, online, by our parish clergy. The **Mass of the Lord's Supper** will be celebrated later on in the day. Please try to pray the **Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary** privately or with our parish priest on the parish web site or Facebook.

**GOOD FRIDAY**, April 10<sup>th</sup>, the church will be decorated in red. **Tenebre** or *Morning Prayer* will, once again be prayed. A modified **Good Friday Service**, focusing on the reading of the Passion and the Solemn Intercessions, will be offered later in the day. During the service, please venerate a crucifix or cross which you have in your own home. This would also be a good day to pray the **Stations of the Cross** and to pray the **Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary** privately or with your parish priest on the web site. Feel free to stop by the church and obtain a Stations booklet but be sure to take the booklet home with you. Once used, please do not return it to the box.

**EASTER VIGIL MASS**, April 11<sup>th</sup>, the church will be decorated in white and, once again, **Tenebre** or *Morning Prayer* will be prayed. The Easter Vigil Mass, the *first Mass of Easter*, will begin with the Pascal or Easter Candle being lighted up in the sanctuary. Additional candles and our beautiful Easter Lilies and other colorful flowers will adorn the sanctuary. The beautiful *Exultet* will then be proclaimed. During the liturgy we will have an opportunity to renew our Baptismal Promises. The Easter flowers, made possible by your generous offerings, will help enhance the setting for our televised Mass and also help to provide a warm and beautiful church for those who wish to make private visits throughout Easter Week. The Easter flower envelopes/memorials will be kept on the altar and the intentions you have written will be included in all of our Sunday and Daily Masses. The **Easter water** will be blessed and the individual bottles reserved for distribution at a later feast day such as *Corpus Christi*. **EASTER SUNDAY MASS**, April 12<sup>th</sup>, Easter Sunday Mass will be available for viewing throughout the day.

Once again, our prayers and deepest sympathies are with all those who are hurting during these troubling times. We have tried to include the names of our recently sick or deceased parishioners in our Sunday and Daily Masses and web site. Please let me know if you are aware of anyone who is in need. (**Staedan@optonline.net**) *Prayer* is something we all need to do without ceasing. Prayer is something which will continue to unite us and strengthen us throughout the days and weeks ahead.

On the temporal (financial) side of things, I am grateful to those who keep dropping off or mailing us their weekly envelopes and checks. I really wish, however, that there were more of you. Our parish expenses have not gone down during this epidemic. Our collection revue for the past three weeks *should* have been \$36,000. Instead, we banked about six. I realize that many of you have been financially hurt by the current times and that you can't give what you don't have. Again, I pray that your circumstances will turn around for the better, very soon. Hang in there! I am, therefore, especially grateful to receive the ongoing financial support of those whose personal financial means still allow them to contribute. Once again this week, I was so very moved to receive a generous check with the note "*we would like to give a helping hand at this difficult time.*" If, for the time being, **you** are able to give something extra to our beautiful parish, please do.

The **Easter Food Pantry Drive** will still take place and those of you who are able, may drop your food and paper good donations in the church vestibule. Your **MITE BOXES** may also be dropped into the appropriate receptacles or else you may mail us a check payable to Catholic Charities Community Services of Rockland (CCCSR).

Please sign up for the **WeShare** giving program which allows you to give on a regular, ongoing basis. Just go to our parish web site and discover how easy it is to sign up. This is a really big help to the parish and should be a big help to you as well. Many thanks to those who are able to continue to send in their **Renew & Rebuild** pledge payments. Many thanks also to those of you who are supporting the 2020 **Cardinal's Stewardship Appeal** where, during these troubling times, the need far outweighs the limited resources we have available. For the first time ever, some very needy people who turn to the church may well be left wanting.

Some **live streaming sites** which you might visit are the St. Patrick's website and the broadcasts from the Catholic Faith Network and Sirius XM 129. Mass for Easter Sunday will also be aired on WPIX, channel 11. On both of these Sundays, Mass will begin at 10 AM and not 10:15. If you are not currently receiving my pastoral **Flocknotes** letters and would like to belong to the **online Flock**, please send me your *email address*. Please, also, continue to join us, on line, every day and, by all means, share our parish contact information with family and friends <**Staedan.org**> or **Facebook**.

**Please know that you are not alone.** You are always remembered in our daily prayers and Masses. Please pray for your parish priests and deacon as well. Remember, we all need each other and most of all, we all need to feel the ongoing presence of God in our lives as never before in order to share with Him our fears and sorrows and most personal needs. Saint Aedan, pray for us.

***"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God and the fellowship of the holy Spirit be with all of you. (2 Cor.13:13)***

Prayerfully in Christ,  
*Msgr. Emmet Nevin*  
Monsignor Emmet Nevin, Pastor