

MESSAGE FROM THE LAP TOP

ALLELUIA, HE HAS RISEN AS HE SAID, ALLELUIA!

A blessed **Easter** to all:

We are now up to the Third Sunday of Easter and it has clearly been one month and a half since we have been physically able to worship together. I have certainly been able to share in the glory of the Eucharist by the fact of my priestly ministry. **The Mass intentions that have been requested by our faithful family members of HNOJ I have been attending to each day.** The hour at which Mass is offered varies from day to day as my routine has been turned upside down due to the shelter in home direction we have all been under. Just like you, I am not certain when we will be returning to a “normal” pattern to life. Our hopes are that it will come soon. Till then Mass intentions are still able to be set for the year going forward. You can catch me over the phone or leave a message at the office to contact you to arrange for an intention.

Right now, the **celebrations of First Communion and Confirmation have been placed on hold. Celebration of Baptism is placed on hold as well.** The gatherings of our Religious Education classes have been suspended as well. **But, I have to give great credit to Sr. Nancy who has worked very diligently with her catechists to develop a syllabus that is available on the Religious Education website to continue the learning process at home for the various grade levels.** I also wish to highlight Sr. Nancy’s efforts, along with our dedicated catechists for **First Communion and Confirmation, of being able to work with one of the on-line meeting resources to be able to work with our Communion and Confirmation students in holding weekly class gatherings to help keep them involved with their sacramental preparations and be ready for the time we shall be able to gather and celebrate these sacraments.** Certainly, we are not the lone parish that is working via these means to be able to keep the faith formation process moving forward. I am certainly awed at the desire and dedication of Sr. Nancy and our catechists to work through a difficult challenge for our students and to help them continue growing in the faith. **Well done Sr. Nancy and staff.**

I would like to comment now on a general feeling that has been voiced to me by more than one soul that I have had contact with over the time of this pandemic; “God must certainly be punishing us.” This remark was shared with me during the time of Lent and Holy Week. I responded to each soul by reminding them where we were in the time of our liturgical timeline with the Church. We were in the most intense moments of whole faith experience where we are uniting ourselves to God’s deep and intense love for us. He gave us His only begotten Son to share with us His gospel message of love and life. He has given us a human face to the divine eternal. Jesus Himself has told us in scripture that He has not come to judge the world but to fulfill all that had been said about Him. Why, with this Third Sunday of Easter, we hear the beautiful account from Luke’s Gospel of the encounter on the Road to Emmaus. Jesus listened to the disciples saddened reflections on what had happened in Jerusalem that was filled with confusion. He, on the other hand, took them through Moses and the prophets that shed light on all that had to be to fulfilled and confirmed His resurrection when He took bread, blessed and broke it and gave it to the two at which their eyes were opened and they recognized Him. What we are enduring right now is not punishment but a result of rejection of God’s perfect creation of the world for a less than perfect world that the Evil One led us to choose.

That is all for now. **GO FORTH AND ANNOUNCE THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD. MANY BLESSINGS FOR THE WEEK!!!!**

Fr. Mike