

MESSAGE FROM THE LAP TOP

WE ADORE YOU O CHRIST AND WE PRAISE YOU!

A blessed **Palm Sunday of The Passion of the Lord** to all:

These are certainly strange times that we are now at the threshold. I will tell you a secret; I am composing this message to you as I sit at my dining table and the Palm Sunday Mass from St. Peter's Basilica is unfolding on the television. I realize that, for the vast majority of you, our HNOJ family of faith, this is your main link with the practices of our faith that, till recent times, you have been able to share in freely with your presence at Mass. This world-wide pandemic has certainly disrupted our regular daily routines that, I think we all must admit, we have taken for granted could never be disrupted. As we now approach almost one month since the disruption of public Mass, along with a plethora of many other activities to life, I have heard from a good number whom either I called, or whom called me, the sense of emptiness that being away from Mass is having upon their lives. I listen deeply and feel the same void as I take time each day to offer Mass to a church that is void of the people for whom our Lord Jesus, in the course of this most holy of all weeks in the life of our Church, gave His life for.

I hear the plight of those who are missing the physical closeness to our Lord that comes with your Sunday processions to HNOJ, walking amongst our beloved deceased who rest all around our church and sharing in the offering of the Mass. Thankfully, for the time being, the transmission of Mass and other liturgical services like the rosary, Stations of the Cross and more are being supplied through the various means of media like EWTN, the computer feeds from St. Patrick's Cathedral, Word on Fire and more are helping to take some of the sting that this time of pandemic and "social" isolation is having upon us. I can also, and I have shared this with a few whom I have spoken with over the phone, this time of "social" isolation from the Mass that we have been able to, up till recently, choose to take seriously as the source and summit of our lives, or, sadly in some way, take for granted as less necessary for my presence to be at than any of the other secular activities that have flooded into our Sunday day of rest, maybe it can give us a time to reflect on the vast amount of brothers and sisters of faith who do not have the freedom to gather freely and worship as we do and must carry the faith and celebrate the Eucharist in hiding and clandestine ways. Maybe we can reflect upon the faithful Catholic members of those countries which oppress the Church such as China, North Korea, and others. Reflect upon this momentary disruption to our lives and link up with those whose lives are perpetually disrupted due to, not pandemic, but political ideology that is fiercely hostile to the Ways of God and faith. I pray that this period of disruption, we pray that should be resolving itself in a short period of time, will give us a deeper appreciation of what we have freely that others risk their lives to share in daily.

I had an offer from a neighboring pastor to join with him for services during Holy Week so that I would not be alone. I thought about it but I decided to stay here since I felt that HNOJ needs to have the liturgical celebrations of Holy Week to keep the Spirit of our Lord Jesus alive and active among us. I invite you this week to take advantage of the media offerings that you can join in at home. For the Paschal Triduum of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter, join with me in prayer Thursday evening, Friday afternoon, Saturday night and Sunday morning as I gather in our little parish church to celebrate the Paschal Mystery of our salvation.

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

Fr. Mike