

MESSAGE FROM THE LAP TOP

LIVE JESUS IN OUR HEARTS FOREVER!

Sunday Greetings Family of HNOJ:

I pray that this week's message finds you all well and, having "enjoyed" a truncated Independence Day weekend, now moving forward into a very different period of "summer" vacations which, this year, are becoming "summer" stay-cations. I am living through this right now as I should be out in Greenwood, Indiana visiting with my dear friends Mike and Jeannie Dupont with travels to my sister in Kentucky and a much cherished family down in Tennessee. But, I am operating out of the rectory and working on arranging day visits and overnight stays with dear friends from my past parish assignments, whom I have not seen in a good while. I can emphasize with you as to how much this pandemic has caused us to alter much to our lives that we have taken for granted till now. We will be able to, with wise research and vital testing of potential drugs, to overcome this. **Stay close with God, stay strong with God and we shall all be better and stronger beyond this.**

At the present moment, I am tapping out this message at quarter of seven this Saturday morning having taken an overnight trip mid-week to visit with my classmate, Fr. Tom Dicks, who was staying at the family bungalow down in Lavallette, NJ, and working on processing the very sad announcement that came out Thursday morning on the closure of 20 Catholic Schools here in the Archdiocese and the merger of three here in Orange County that came as a great surprise. As I looked over the list I recognized St. Peter's in Poughkeepsie which was my neighbor when I was at Regina Coeli. That means that there is no catholic school presence in all of Northern Dutchess. Diving Mercy School closing in New Windsor means that from Garnerville in Rockland County all the way up to Kingston there is no catholic school presence along the west shore of the Hudson River except for Bishop Dunn in Newburgh which is privately run. The merging of Sacred Heart of Monroe and St. Stephen – St. Edward of Warwick into St. John the Evangelist of Goshen depletes a once burgeoning catholic school environment here in Orange County to a precious few and localized to central Orange County at that. The far reaching effects of this virus are now being seen not just in lives lost but in "livelihoods" that are being lost and altered drastically. **More now than ever the need is great for the development within the parish structure of good, strong and vibrant Religious Education programs that will assist you, the families of Church's future, in the capturing of the faith and growth into it.**

Here at HNOJ, we are blessed to have such a vital person as Sr. Nancy Doran at the helm of our Religious Education program. She is so in love with Our Lord and her mission of formation in the faith. But, she cannot do it alone; she needs dedicated members of our parish family to share their love of the Lord and their faith as catechists and assistants in the program. Thank You to the catechists who have signed on with sister for next year. A word of encouragement for those who have not responded to sister yet; I know it is not easy but who said anything was going to be easy. Think about the first catechists to be commissioned to go and carry the Gospel to the entire world; what would our lives be like if they dwelt on their limitations and faults rather than on their encounter they had with the risen Lord? To our families of HNOJ, registration forms for the 2020-2021 formation year can be found via our parish web site in the Religious Education section. **Please go to our web site (info found on face page of this bulletin) and fill out and return ASAP.** The conclusion of the Religious Education program this year has been surreal. Please help Sr. Nancy to put the year ahead in order so that she, and all of us, can have the best program going forward. New families can also register via our Website and also contact Sr. Nancy at the Religious Education office this week.

Quick word in support of this year's Annual Cardinal's Appeal. We are within reach of our \$23,000.00 goal. 69 families have pledged roughly \$21,690.00. I know these are difficult times. All I can do is encourage your support when the mailing comes. Thank you to the 69; can you add your family to this number this week?

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

Fr. Mike