

MESSAGE FROM THE LAP TOP

LIVE JESUS IN OUR HEARTS FOREVER!

Sunday Greetings Family of HNOJ:

This week's message is being offered with feelings that are truly mixed. My heart is heavy with sorrow for, as you should be well aware, our cluster, our deanery, our archdiocese lost a very fine, young priest last weekend. Fr. Michael Cedro, our neighbor at Holy Cross, died in his sleep sometime Saturday night or Sunday morning. Michael was young, 48 years of age and had more years of priesthood ahead of him. Michael had so much more to be able to offer the people of the archdiocese in the years ahead but that now is only a speculation of what would have been. Michael was a generous neighbor to HNOJ as he would respond to assist when needed for help with confessions and when I would be away for vacation or other duties that drew me away from HNOJ. In like respect, I would reciprocate when Michael needed the same confession help or coverage for funerals or other services. Returning to my rectory last Sunday and recognizing I received a phone message from a parishioner whom I just spoke with at the 10:45, seeing no message was left, I quickly returned the call and was informed of the terrible news that this fine parishioner had just received after leaving Mass. Those of you who have received similar notification in the past know the feelings that envelop; shock, disbelief, speechlessness, sadness, the need to reach out to others to confirm the situation. It was all true, it was all real. I wish it wasn't.

Michael struggled with his health. He was on the threshold of undergoing a procedure that was going to hopefully assist him on the road to better health. Sadly, we will never know if it would have made a better life for him. The people of Holy Cross / Our Lady of the Scapular are now an orphaned community for a while. I understand that Bishop Colacicco is overseeing the parish until a new pastor can be appointed. The difficult thing about this is that our numbers of priests within the archdiocese is razor thin. The ability to be able to fill a need is becoming a deep challenge here and all around. **May I suggest that we here at HNOJ do two things for the days and weeks ahead; let's pray.** First, that almighty God will grace Cardinal Dolan to be able to assign a good priest to Holy Cross / Our Lady of the Scapular to bring healing and continue the good work that Fr. Michael Cedro was doing. Secondly, let's pray to our good and gracious God that His call to faithful men and women to serve Him as priests, consecrated men and women religious priests, brothers and sisters will be responded openly and cheerfully as the need is so great now. And, finally, may the soul of Fr. Michael Cedro, and the souls of all the faithful departed, **REST IN PEACE.**

From sadness one moment our attention quickly brightens as this day, Saturday August 22, and the week inclusive, will bring many graces upon our parish of HNOJ as our students of the First Communion classes along with our "back nine" confirmandi will experience their sacraments finally. It is a special grace to share our Lord Jesus in the Eucharist for these children whose lives have been disrupted for the past months. It is equally a great joy to welcome Bishop Gerardo Colacicco this coming Tuesday to administer Confirmation once again here at HNOJ. **I ask that you please keep our First Communion students and Confirmandi in your prayers through these weeks leading up to the start of school.** May God bless our Communion students and keep them in His loving grasp. Come Holy Spirit and enlighten our Confirmandi to use your gifts for the betterment of the Church and their lives.

FYI: Just receive notice that the special collection that would have been taken up on Good Friday will now be had on the weekend of September 12/13. Cardinal Dolan will have a letter for us in a couple of weeks. Just want you to be prepped.

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

Fr. Mike