

MESSAGE FROM THE LAPTOP

PRAISED BE JESUS CHRIST!

Sunday Greetings Family of HNOJ & HC:

We come and gather this day to bring a culmination to our Christmas season with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. It is unfathomable that just a few short weeks ago we came together to celebrate the new-born babe of Bethlehem and now we are presented with the fully grown Man that Jesus developed into. It almost seems anticlimactic that all of the build up to Christmas, the lights, the flowers, the cards of greeting, the decorations and everything else has been dismantled and stored away. The important message that we should take away from this celebration is that the seasons of Advent / Christmas are vital to our position in time as they allow us to venture back to the time when our Lord Jesus, at that moment in time, descended from His place with the Father and, via the FIAT of our Blessed Mother, through the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, was conceived in the womb of the Blessed Mother and thus took on a nature that was the Father's plan for the glorious outlaying of salvation that had been yearned for ages. We must now take what this celebration of The Baptism of the Lord places into our hearing this Sunday and move ahead with these next weeks of Ordinary Time heeding the voice of the Father; **"LISTEN TO HIM"**.

How can we **LISTEN TO HIM** in this year of 2021? One case that I wish to share with you from a personal stance reflects upon my "kid" sister. She is two years younger than me and lives in Kentucky and now has joined my brother (1 year younger than me) in the wonderful world of **RETIREMENT**. I, the oldest, am still on the clock and even have another parish to care for. But I digress. Speaking with my sister just prior to Christmas, she asked me about a certain priest extremely popular on the internet and if he was "legit". Assuring Elizabeth, my sister, that he was top-notch, I inquired why her interest? Dear sister just warmed my heart when she informed me that she was signed up to do an on-line Bible Study led by this priest because she wished to delve more deeply into the Sacred Scriptures and have more firm foundation upon which she wished to build her life. My sister also tickled my heart by stating that she was going to start to attend **WEEKDAY MASS** as soon as she can with this COVID-19 insanity. Not bad for a "plan" for retirement on just a spiritual plane. Might I share my thoughts with you who share with my sister the wonderful experience of "retirement"; there is no greater experience that one can have then encountering our Lord Jesus Christ in the most viable ways possible, through His Word and Sacrament. I am encouraged by the effort of some of our HC members to delve into God's Word via the internet for now each Wednesday. I will look to see if we can get the information incorporated in the bulletins of HC & HNOJ to see if it can be built upon in this new year. What I am discouraged a bit about is attendance at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass during the week, especially at HC. Weekday Mass is not an obligation as our Sunday Worship is. It is a privilege that parishes, which have a priest assigned, are able to share in with the priest who is under no obligation to offer Mass, except for Sunday. It has been an understanding by we priests, who have been called to this sacred ministry, that we desire to use this power God has invested us with not only for our benefit but for that of those whom we serve. Four days of the week, twice @ HC & twice @ HNOJ, I gather @ 9:00 each morning to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. **With all the New Year's resolutions that have been made, why not resolve to join with me and our weekday faithful in allowing Jesus to nourish and guide us via His Word and Sacrament?**

To follow up on my last column's closing remark; a few week's back, our good Deacon Ed shared with me a parishioner's concern about the pockets of conversing taking place following the close of Mass @ HC. I would opine prior to Mass as well. As a whole, we as a people have become so accustomed to "crowd" settings such as sporting events, concerts, etc.... which do not have a **"SACRED ATMOSPHERE"**. Our churches are **SACRED SETTINGS DUE TO THE FACT THAT WE HAVE THE REAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST DWELLING AMONG US IN THE TABERNACLE**. I ask that we be conscious of this fact, and the desire of souls who seek to spend time in prayer, to bring any family or group discussions / conversations to a setting other than the body of the church, both @ HC & HNOJ. Thank You for attending to this with understanding and respect.

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

Fr. Mike