

MESSAGE FROM THE LAPTOP

PRAISED BE JESUS CHRIST!

Sunday Greetings Parish Families of HNOJ & HC:

It is unbelievable that we are now one month into 2021. This Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time gives us the final weekend of January and puts us on the threshold of the month of February. Not only do we enter into the month of valentines & hearts, we also will be ramping up with various Church moments which will help us with the “wintertime blues”. **Ash Wednesday is just seventeen days from this weekend and I pray you are starting to think LENT.** But before we get to Ash Wednesday there are some liturgical actions that will fill in the early days of February. Beginning this weekend, and for the next couple as well, a special receptacle marked **USED PALMS will be found in the vestibules of both HC & HNOJ.** As I mentioned in an earlier Laptop, the parish family of HNOJ is used to this but it may come new to our parish family members of HC. We want you to bring all the old palm that you may have lying around the house and drop it into the receptacle in the vestibules so that, around a week prior to Ash Wednesday, a dedicated parishioner will burn all the palm so that we can have our Ashes for that special day.

This week, on **Tuesday February 2, the Church celebrates the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord.** This is exactly forty days from the Nativity of the Lord and commemorates that glorious moment in the Temple when Mary and Joseph brought the infant Jesus to fulfill the Law of God in presenting the first-born Son. We are introduced to Simeon who was promised by God that he would not see death until he was blessed to gaze upon the awaited promised one of God. Taking the new-born Christ child into his arms, Simeon proclaimed the Glory of God in the beautiful Canticle of Simeon that is prayed every day as part of Night Prayer: **“Now Lord you may let your servant go in peace.....”.** One of the references that is made in the canticle regarding the Christ child is that He would be a “Light to the Gentiles”. This reference regarding Light leads Mother Church to use this day as an opportunity to bless candles that would be used, not only for Mass and church, but candles of the faithful that would be brought to Mass which would be used at prayer or other sacramental moments that would take place at home. **This year, February 2 is this Tuesday and 9:00 Mass will be @ HC as usual. I would wish to encourage as many who can attend Mass that day to bring candles that can be blessed for your sacred moments at home.**

The next day, February 3 is the optional memorial of St. Blasé which is the traditional day for the blessing of throats. Due to the pandemic that is still raging about us all, priests have been advised that we shall not be following through with the traditional crossed candles but shall offer the words of blessing as part of the conclusion of Mass. **In order to help serve those who would not be able to join us for Mass on February 3, Fr. Nick and I shall be extending the prayer for the blessing of throats at the conclusion of the Masses this coming weekend.** It is no miracle cure for the COVID-19 virus but at least it can give us a sense of God’s continued bestowing of Grace upon whatever we are going through at this time of the year.

Remember, bring your used palm to church, not just on the weekends but during day hours as both churches are open for prayer.

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

Fr. Mike