

MESSAGE FROM THE LAPTOP

TURN AWAY FROM SIN AND BE FAITHFUL TO THE GOSPEL!

Sunday Greetings Parish Families of HNOJ & HC:

So far, So good. Our celebration of Ash Wednesday went along “swimmingly” and now we begin the trek into LENT with our best intentions guiding us. I pray that you who embraced the Lenten work of Mother St. Teresa of Calcutta are finding many spiritual jewels among the pages. I personally refrained to take one so that all parishioners, whom God intended the work to be for, would get its full benefit.

I wish to highlight STATIONS OF THE CROSS that are being offered at both parishes each Friday evening of Lent @ 7:00. Please make note that prior to STATIONS @ Holy Name of Jesus, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered beginning @6:00. This is certainly a wonderful combination of spiritual wealth that offers many graces for all who make the effort and sacrifice of time these Fridays of Lent.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered every Saturday morning at Holy Cross from 8:30 – 9:30 am for those who cannot make the evening hour the day prior.

I want to take a moment to address an issue of etiquette for Mass that I have been a witness to in the past few months that just can't go past without something being said. One of the things that the celebrant's chair affords me is the ability to view the whole body of both churches and the comings and goings that transpire from the moment I process down the aisle. One aspect that has been unsettling is the “tardiness” that continues to affect both communities as we move forward with our new schedules in place. There is one thing that I have to interject before I continue with my instruction. With the new Sunday schedule and the need for me to get from HNOJ to HC, or visa/versa, I get the pressure that time places upon families and other constraints that I am now part of. I have to work on my approach to the celebration of Mass and timing of my homily when I have to celebrate Mass going between the two parishes with the time element that has been put into place by me. I am sure that Fr. Nick is certainly conscious of this reality as well. But there is one reality that comes with this scenario: no one can be late for Mass if Fr. Mike or Fr. Nick runs a bit late. Can't start without us, right?

But, once Mass starts, then the timing of arrival falls upon you. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is made up of two distinct segments: **THE LITURGY OF THE WORD** and **THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**. Both are integral for our full participation in the Mass and the reception of the **GRACE** that comes with our participation in the **MASS**. What was explained in Liturgy class many moons ago in Seminary was that the Liturgy of the Word is God speaking to us so that in the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we are able to respond back to God with our whole self because we have been enlightened via **HIS SACRED AND HOLY WORD**. What I find sad is the souls that pass through the doors and we are a good part through the Liturgy of the Word. Or souls that walk in at the preparation of the gifts and come forward to receive **THE EUCHARIST** having missed part, or all, of the Liturgy of the Word. Has one truly participated in the **FULLNESS OF THE MASS**? I would say not. Yet, to approach to receive the Eucharist just seems to be the thing to do no matter what. Receiving the Eucharist is not like getting a token at a carnival. This is truly a sacred encounter with the Lord Jesus who has given all for us. Can we say the same on our part if we are nonchalant when we arrive for Mass? I would say not. Don't approach to receive if you did not receive the totality of God's Holy Word. Approach, with hands folded across your chest, because you realize you missed an important segment of the Mass that you realize is necessary for your **CATHOLIC LIFE**. There is no embarrassment in being signed with the mark of the Cross instead of receiving communion, because it is a valuable lesson in how important full participation in the Mass truly is.

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

Fr. Mike