

MESSAGE FROM THE LAPTOP

ALLELUIA, HE IS RISEN AS HE SAID, ALLELUIA!

Sunday Greetings Parish Families of HNOJ & HC:

I would like to take a few moments to clarify something I shared with you through this column a few weeks back. I was a bit miffed from having left a Mass at which only 20 people were present and passing within eye shot of the local ball fields and catching a glimpse of a pretty crowded parking field. I realize that my train of thought, and expression of that, may have been a bit abrupt. I want to set it straight that it is great that the youngsters are once again able to get out onto the fields and enjoy the aspects of the game of baseball. The fact that high school sports programs have been allowed to happen is a great thing. Things are beginning to open up once again and that is great. It looks as if we are coming toward the end of the tunnel and life can, once again, take upon itself the full meaning it is meant to express. What I guess came out in my column was the frustration I felt at such a low attendance at Mass and the weak attendance, the following morning at HNOJ, of youth. With the new configuration between the two parishes of adjusted Mass schedules, I have been deeply concerned about the number of faces that I have been seeing at HNOJ since church has opened up again.

Thinking through this experience, I have come to realize both parishes have been thrust through some difficult times. Both parishes have experienced death in a different way: HC with the death of Fr Michael; HNOJ with the death of liturgical life as it was. For a while, life was normal when we had the priestly assistance that allowed both parishes to operate at status quo. But, with the present set of circumstances of the dwindling number of priests, and the abrupt departure of Fr. Chris, life as a parish has abruptly changed for HNOJ more so. I feel the loss deeply by the faces that I am not seeing at our amended Mass schedules. I want to stress that we did not lose the availability of Mass at either parish. Both parishes had almost identical schedules. The only adjustment is location of Mass at a given time. I pray that we can begin to view this scenario as the future of the Catholic presence in our area and make the effort to support and make it work.

I want to continue highlighting the Annual Cardinal's Stewardship Appeal as we journey into the Easter season. As of Friday, May 7, the reports for HNOJ & HC stood at: HNOJ was \$22,031.00 pledged by 62 families while HC was \$19,400.00 from 54 families. HNOJ is so close to its \$22,500.00 goal while HC has been making up ground toward its goal of \$30,500.00. I would greatly encourage those who still have the mailings from the Archdiocese to take some time this week to prayerfully consider a pledge, a significant offering that may be the suggested gift recommended or a comparable gift that can be paid over a period of time. All families of HNOJ & HC join me in supporting this year's Appeal. I would like to get a little personal right now with the most recent notification from our Appeal rep. HNOJ is so close to our goal. I urge more than just the 62 we have now to respond to the mailings this week. HC is doing better than last year's Appeal at this point; but, from a parish of roughly 1,500 families, last week saw 3 GIFTS RECEIVED. I beg our family base at HC to join with me in reaching out to this year's Appeal request with a generous pledge that will assist HC toward the stated goal.

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

Fr. Mike