



Dear Parishioners,

Peace of Christ!

I hope this email finds you and your loved ones safe and healthy. As we head into Thanksgiving, I wanted to take a moment to reach out to you and offer some updates. It would be an understatement to say that this has been a challenging year. But I find myself especially thankful for the blessings that we as a parish continue to receive. What am I thankful for?

- ***I'm thankful*** that our Mass attendance continues to increase. Although we're still far below our legal limit of 33 percent, it's good to see everyone who comes, and to worship together in person.
- ***I'm thankful*** that we're hosting our socials after the 7pm Sunday Mass in our outdoor courtyard, observing safety guidelines, where our young adults, and those young at heart, can come together for fellowship at a time when human interaction is so important.
- ***I'm thankful*** that our RCIA program has been running since September—a dozen participants who will complete their sacraments of initiation, plus a handful of parishioners who want to grow deeper in faith. We've been meeting in person every other week, and I admire their commitment.
- ***I'm thankful*** for the vibrant devotion of our parishioners, like our Spanish prayer group that meets every Friday evening, our Ecuadorian community that just completed their novena to Nuestra Señora de Quinche, our Chinese community that gathers every Sunday after Mass to honor Our Lady of China, and our Warriors youth group that is running another successful winter coat drive and Advent baby gift and diaper drive.
- ***I'm thankful*** for our staff and volunteers, who have worked tirelessly and selflessly to ensure that we remain fully operational, and whose diligence has resulted in not a single reported infection among the many people who come each week to our Masses and other events.
- ***I'm thankful*** for all of your spiritual and financial support that has kept us going through these difficult times, and that allows us to continue to serve you.

So yes, we all have reason to give thanks. We continue to keep busy with a great deal of pastoral activity: weddings and funerals, baptisms and confessions. As I'm sure you saw in the bulletin, we bid a fond farewell to Fr. Andrew Thi back in October. At the age of 90, Fr. Thi has moved to be with his family in warm and sunny Florida, where he will get the care and attention he deserves. We have also welcomed a seminarian, Deacon Matthew Breslin, who will be assisting us on weekends as he prepares for his priestly ordination in May.

Our attention now turns to the holy season of Advent—Christmas is coming! Some of you have inquired about our Christmas Masses. Our schedule will be:

- **Christmas Eve:**
  - 4:00pm
- **Christmas:**
  - 12am Midnight
  - 9am (Spanish)
  - 10:30am
  - 11:30am (at Most Precious Blood)

As I'm sure you're aware, the virus situation is very much in flux, and circumstances may change between now and Christmas. Please check our website and bulletin for the latest information. As things stand, our capacity is 200 people. Our Christmas Masses will be first come, first served. We ask our regular parishioners, you who are receiving this email, to arrive early enough to ensure a seat. Once we reach our capacity, we will have to close our doors. Please arrive early if you plan to attend one of our Christmas Masses!

We're also excited to announce the launch of our online gift shop, which complements the gift shop inside our welcome center and tour office. You can find a number of beautiful items here, including our signature Rose Window Christmas tree ornament. It's a wonderful way to support the basilica and share it with others. Click on the following link to navigate to the gift shop: <https://takeawalk.com/old-cathedral-remembrances/>

On behalf of our clergy and staff, I want to wish each and every one of you a very happy and safe holiday, as we thank God for all our blessings. I look forward to seeing you in our basilica and, with God's grace, to growing together in holiness.

In Christ,

Father Graebe

