

April 24, 2020

Dear Friends,

Well it seems as if spring has officially arrived! The early spring flowers are in bloom and though we saw snow just a few days ago, it is sunny today and warming up as I sit in my office and *day-dream* a little while looking out the office window!

I trust that this note finds you still in good health! We are healthy here and moving along with our new *virtual reality*: zoom meetings, teleconference calls, constant contact with you, with the Diocesan Finance and Worship Offices, words of support from our Diocesan Administrator, Fr. Don Oleksiak, and so many wishes of support and thanks from you! Our new reality is sinking in and we are taking it day by day!

With the Governor's mandate that schools will not reopen this year, know that our Principal and Teachers and Staff have kicked it into *high-gear* and there is much learning and reading and projects happening! Fourth quarter MAY look different, but academic progress and advancement remains the St. Mary School (SMS) way! Keep it up boys and girls and THANKS to our amazing Leader, Teachers and Staff!

By now you know that both First Communion and Confirmation Masses WILL be rescheduled. I have been in touch with Bishop Gries for some fall dates for Confirmation and when we are able to gather again in Church, we will find a date for First Communion. It's just a guess, but am thinking later this summer.

Weekend Mass is continuing to be broadcast for you to pray and celebrate while in your homes. I know it's not the same as being here, but, as you will read in my Pastor's Column this weekend, even the *virtual Mass* has great power and "*above all, trust that it is God who makes the Mass and the Eucharist both possible and powerful. And that power is sufficient even if we are limited to participating through livestream.*"

Our office staff and personnel are continuing to work both from the office on Monday, Wednesday and Friday and from their home. We want you to know we are here for you – call and leave a message, email, text, etc...

On behalf of all of us, a personal THANK YOU for everything you have given to SUPPORT the parish and school. Your continued generosity is a testament to our faith! THANKS! If you haven't already CONSIDERED donating to the Church by way of St Mary eGiving – that is the electronic funds transfer, NOW may be a good time. Check the sidebar on the website and it is safe and secure. Someone is in the office on Monday, Wednesday or Friday to assist you with setting up your account. THANKS for ALL you have done and are doing to keep us serving and caring for YOU!

Stay strong! Pray and pray some more! We will be together soon!

Fr. John