

Dear Parishioners,

As we gather this weekend, we begin this beautiful time to honor the Blessed Mother during this special month of May. Maureen will crown my little statue of our Blessed Mother of Lourdes at Mass this Sunday. I invite all of you at home to crown your statue of the Blessed Mother with some flowers on your prayer table and if you do not have a statue of our Blessed mother, have your children draw a picture of Mary and place that picture in a special place. I would invite you as a family to pray either the rosary or a decade of the rosary each day with your family. If you are not familiar with the rosary, go on any Catholic website and you will find easy instructions to learn this beautiful prayer.

I welcome all of our parishioners, virtual family and friends and our special needs families to our 10:00 a.m. Mass this weekend. As you are aware, every month I celebrate Mass for our special needs individuals and their parents/caretakers. I know our Special Needs community is finding this time both difficult and boring. Those who take care of our beloved special needs parishioners need our prayers, mass intentions and support during this time. It is difficult when those you are responsible for can't really understand why they can't go out and interact with friends. So we pray for patience for parents and caretakers of special needs individuals and look forward to the time when we will all be together again very soon. Let us continue to keep all of the house managers running group homes very much in prayer these days and when all this is over, we all need to celebrate.

This weekend we celebrate Vocation Sunday. We hear about Jesus the Good Shepherd calling us into active discipleship. There are many types of vocations. There is the single parent, the married parent, the single person with no children, a religious man or woman and of course, a priest. On this Vocation Sunday, I thank God for the gift of my priesthood. This gift of priesthood was nurtured by my parents and family and is most certainly, the most precious part of my life. As a priest, it is very important to put God first and to lead others in the living of our Catholic faith with both courage and compassion. Our Holy Father, Pope Francis tells us that the shepherd must smell like the sheep. I don't think that my beautiful sheep here at St. Luke are particularly smelly but more importantly, I am proud to be part of your lives and to be able to walk the walk of joy and sorrow as Christ has invited me to do. Congratulations to Fr. Alex, who will celebrate his first anniversary of priesthood on Monday, May 11! We have been blessed to have Fr. Alex with us these past difficult weeks. Notre Dame church in Hanover Township will be blessed to have him as their assistant priest (vicar). Fr. Alex is devoted to God and is a great servant of the Lord, enthusiastic and loving. Please keep him in prayer as he prepares to celebrate the first year of his priesthood.

Since becoming your pastor, I wanted to find a way to communicate with you that is easy and uncomplicated. Thanks to the great efforts of Nina, Flocknote has now been established here at St. Luke. This is a system by which I can text you with any parish openings, closings or any news that I think you should know about. If you have already received a text from us, you don't have to do anything. If not, we ask you to connect with us by sending a text to 84576 and in the message type: "Connectstluke". You will automatically be sent a link to your phone to sign up. Enter your name, email address and cell phone number. We are delighted to introduce this new way to communicate.

Many of you have asked about our parishioners who have passed away and I wanted to let you know that this information is available on the church website under Prayers or <https://stlukeparishlv.com/bereavement-page>.

*Fr. Owen*