



St. John the Evangelist Sacred Heart - Oakwood

March 29, 2020
Fifth Sunday of Lent

1515 Western Ave.
Grafton, ND 58237



This has been a unique Lent. We have definitely entered into the tomb with Jesus and await the joy of resurrection. Until then, though, we suffer. As Catholics, we believe that suffering in union with Christ accomplishes miraculous things. The Passion of Jesus yields for us the gift of eternal life. We must exercise the theological virtues of faith, hope and love during this period of trial; let us not squander the graces given to us in this present cross.

Some may wonder, though, why God is allowing the Coronavirus pandemic to occur. They question that if He is love, then why is this happening? God is love, and the two greatest attributes of love are mercy and justice. Mercy is for the repentant and justice for the unrepentant. Any parent knows that these two elements of love are present in their parenting. Mercy is manifested when a parent corrects their child in the hope of forming them in goodness, and the child is sorry and doesn't do that action again. However, when the child rejects the correction, then they get punished. This is an act of justice by the parent, but still a manifestation of love because it is oriented toward teaching the child how to live and behave in goodness. God is the perfect parent. He is our Heavenly Father.

Do we as a Church, a nation, and a world deserve mercy or justice? Let's reflect on this. For at least the last 50 years the prevailing attitude in the Church in the Western world has been one of self-worship, social justice and a smorgasbord watered-down Gospel. The multitudes have adopted the mentality that they can pick and choose what they feel like believing and discard what they don't like. Worship has become so focused on ourselves that many of our church environments, music and preaching is centered on man and not the transcendence and glory of God. Often the emphasis is more on being nice and politically correct than on being holy. The fruit of this is that for every Catholic who enters the Church, six leave her.

Lots of Catholics use birth control. Many live with people they're not married to or are married outside of the Church. More and more Catholics are becoming accepting of the homosexual lifestyle. Half of the Catholics in this country support pro-choice politicians. Seventy percent of Catholics don't even go to Mass and even more don't believe in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Some of our Catholic leadership have set horrible examples and have hurt and scandalized the faithful. We're undeniably in a tough spot right now as a Church.

As a nation, we've outlawed God from our schools and public places and have made Christianity the only socially acceptable prejudice. No problems arise when speaking about Islam in the schools or media, but speak about Christ? People burst from every angle to denounce it. We have falsely accepted a rigid and extreme separation between church and state, not mentioned in or supported by the Constitution. Homosexuality and gender identity is crammed down our throats in every sphere of media. As a nation, we have murdered over 60 million children through abortion. Worldwide, one billion have been slaughtered in the wombs of their mothers. And the list goes on and on.

Is there any real wonder why this pandemic is happening? I'm actually surprised it hasn't happened sooner. God is allowing it to bring us back to our senses. When we look at the Old Testament, God acted in the same way to bring Israel back to Himself. War, pestilence and famine were the three main avenues He employed to punish Israel for their sins in the hope of bringing them back to His covenantal love. God's parenting hasn't changed because He "is the same, yesterday and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

To be reminded that we are children of a merciful, yet perfectly just God, is a sobering reality, especially when faced with the prospect of our mortality. To put it bluntly, people are afraid to die. Why? Because many have little to no faith and the stark truth of the matter is, apart from Him we are nothing.

God has not abandoned us. We must trust Him. We must Repent! Turn from our sins, receive His mercy and live a holy life. We need to seek God's will above everything else and remove the incredible amount of distractions that have filled our hearts. Families need to pray together and genuinely relate to one another. Sports must become a secondary thing in families, not a primary false god that dominates people's lives. We are being given a tremendous grace by the Lord to get ourselves right. I encourage you, my brothers and sisters, embrace this grace of mercy, otherwise, all that's left is God's justice. Please, go to Confession and pray often. God really does love you. Even more than hiding in your homes, hide yourself in His Heart. Eucharistic Adoration is a great way to do that. Jesus is our only secure refuge. Trust Him and be at peace.

May God be praised and may you be blessed!

Our Sympathy to the families of:

Anna Welsh
John Ruzicka

Since we are unable to have the funerals right now, please offer a Hail Mary for the repose of their Souls and the comfort of the families.

Please Pray for the Sick: Isaak Suda, Mary Lou Guzzo, Alyce Stendahl, Steve Dolan, Les Aasand, Steve Walters, Jane Zidon, Ed Boura, Vivian Collette Secriest, Gene Hagen, Clifford Bailly, Graham Baker, Chris Loveless, Linda Loveless, JoAnne Sevigny, Ken Jarolimek, Frances Schuster, Aldo Rodriguez, Barb Foerster-Estad, Daryle MacDonald, Marvin French, Kevin Bailly, Brian Fehr, Francis Boulduc, Paul Lunski, Bonnie Shannon, Judy Wolter, Robert Carroll, Richard Anderson, Judy Jiskra, Suzanne Burns, Jodi McCarthy, Diane Lee, Hope Reis, Patrice & Thea Katz, Brad Schuster, Hiladore Osowski, Ron Nowacki, Monica Rudnik, Chad Demers, Jeanne Silewski, Ray Capp, JoAnn & Roger Mattson, Ryan Suda, Emma Basting, John Campbell, Jennifer Osowski, Michelle Collette Donarski, Roger Amiot, Kevin Hoenke, Adly Galle Jaehning, Kathy Ruzicka

Eucharist & Intentions

Saturday, March 28

5:00 p.m. - Alvin Jochim +

Sunday, March 29

- Parishioners

9:30 a.m. - Ed Deitz +

Monday, March 30

5:15 p.m. - Eugene Burns +

Tuesday, March 31

5:15 p.m. - Louis & Alma Collette +

Wednesday, April 1

5:15 p.m. - Richard Deitz +

Thursday, April 2

5:15 p.m. - Randy Dusek +

Friday, April 3

5:15 p.m. - Adelaide Dvorak +

Saturday, April 4

5:00 p.m. - Orell Sevigny +

Sunday, April 5

9:30 a.m. - Parishioners

Alan Collette +

Sacred Heart Parishioners – Please do not leave your offerings in the Church. You can drop them off at the Parish Office in Grafton, or mail them to St. Johns at:

Sacred Heart Church
344 West 15th Street
Grafton, ND 58237

Sacred Heart - April Cleaning is Committee 1

We have **New Memorial - Sympathy Cards** available in the Church. They are by the bulletins in a basket. Please help yourself!

FAMILY SPIRITUAL SURVIVAL PACKS

are now available for pick up in the gathering space, along with Holy Water and booklets. We ask that you take one per family.

The **Bell Tower** will be ringing at noon and 6:00 pm, the traditional time for praying the Angelus. The tune of the bells at this time is the Angelus Tune.

Palms will be available for you to pick up in the Gathering Space after 6:00 p.m. next Saturday, April 4th. Please help yourself and feel free to take more than one.

St. John Memorial

Larry Durand	\$30	Cemetery Fund
Larry Durand	\$25	Parish Center Floor
Larry Durand	\$110	Unrestricted

Sacred Heart Memorial

Larry Durand	\$20	Operating Cemetery Fund
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No truth can really exist external to Christianity.
Cardinal Newman

Reconciliation/Confessions

Will be held on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Fridays from 6:00 – 6:45 p.m. or by appointment. Reconciliation will take place in Classroom #1 located just off the Gathering Space & across from the women's bathroom.

The Parish Office is Open.

Please Call 352-1648 if you have questions.

STEWARDSHIP

Thank you for giving God the first fruits rather than the leftovers! God bless you!

St. John the Evangelist

Given March 22, 2020 - \$4,765.00

God's Gift total Given as of March 22, 2020 - \$53,890.84

Sacred Heart – Oakwood

Given March 22, 2020 - \$100.00

God's Gift total Given as of March 22, 2020 - \$3,192.00

Parents of Faith Formation Students – Deacon Mike has emailed information on continuing your students Faith Formation at home. Also included is information on how to go to the “Formed” Site.

There is quality educational material and entertainment for all ages. If you did not receive this information, please contact Deacon Mike at the parish office (352-1648) and we will see that it is emailed or mailed out to you.

Book of the Month:

What is Wrong with Marijuana?

by Jesse Romero

Here's a question for you: Would you smoke a joint with Jesus? Of course you wouldn't. Common Sense and right reason tell you this. It's a no-brainer!

Yet there are many people today who do not use reason, lack common sense, and no longer think of Jesus.

What is wrong with Marijuana? is such a needed book today. Jesse Romero, a Catholic Evangelist and retired Los Angeles Deputy Sheriff, presents us with the facts on marijuana, helping people of today return to common sense, reason and Jesus!

“Jesus said to her, “did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?” John 11:40

Many of us say that we believe in God. We go to church on Sunday. We volunteer for events at our parish. But when life gets hard, the pressure is on, when things aren't going our way, do we really believe, do we really put our trust in the Lord? When we live a life of gratitude, being thankful for the gifts we have been given, we really do see that God is providing all that we need. It opens our hearts to see God's active presence in our daily lives.

