

God alone!

November 20, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am writing to all of you to give you an update as regards my health condition since my letter in the bulletin this past Sunday. As I mentioned in my letter, I wasn't feeling well when I woke up on Sunday morning November 8th, and speaking with our dean, Fr. John Grace, he agreed that I should sit the Masses out and he was able to ask Fr. Ethelbert to celebrate Mass with you and he has been with you for the past two weekends.

On Monday, November 9th, I did see my primary care physician to be tested for COVID and that test did come back negative. However, I continued to self-isolate, as per my physician's recommendation. When I was retested this past Monday, November 16th, test results came back positive for the presence of COVID-19. In speaking with my primary care about the testing results, it was indicated that I was most likely positive for COVID-19 since the onset of my symptoms on November 8th, but there was not enough of a viral load for the rapid test to be able to detect the presence of the virus at that time as compared to the test results which came back positive a week later.

Present CDC guidelines indicate that isolation and precautions can be discontinued 10 days *after symptom onset* and resolution of fever for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and with improvement of other symptoms. Thus, this past Wednesday, November 18th, I began to discontinue my period of isolation since it was 10 days since the onset of my symptoms on November 8th and my symptoms had resolved. However, when the new test results came back positive later in the morning, I decided it was best to re-enter self-isolation and consult with my primary care physician before continuing integration with the public.

After speaking with my physician late yesterday, even though I would no longer have been infectious by November 18th, it was determined that out of an abundance of caution, it would be better to continue self-isolation until Sunday evening November 22nd, even though my symptoms had been resolved and I have been feeling better for the past week.

This time of quarantine has been particularly difficult in not being able to see you and celebrate Mass with you. However, the wellbeing of all of you is of paramount importance to me and I have offered this time of isolation to our Lady, asking her to use it for the good of our parish, the relief of the sick, and all the intentions for which I am asked to pray. Please know that I continually lift all of you to the Lord at the daily celebration of the Sacrifice of the Mass and I ask you to continue to pray for me in your daily prayers as well. Fr. Ethelbert is happy to be with you again this weekend to celebrate Mass as I continue to observe my quarantine until the end of the day on Sunday.

As a parish, we will continue to clean and disinfect the church after Mass and other Parish facilities on a regular basis in accordance with our procedures. Our collective efforts in wearing a mask, observing social distancing, and other practices will continue to help protect others from contracting COVID-19.

May the Divine Physician continue to heal, protect, and assist all those who are sick, most especially those who suffer the effects of the COVID-19 virus and may His wisdom and strength be given to all those in the healthcare profession to help those whom they serve, to recover their health and well-being.

In Jesus and Mary,

Fr. Michael