Dear Parishioners,

As I shared a couple of months ago in my homily, my good friend and classmate, Fr. Joe Craddock, a priest from Providence, Rhode Island opted out of attending a retreat that Fr. Domenico was offering at the House of Priests in Orange County. Fr. Craddock’s mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s and as any good son, he has taken responsibility for her full care.

Well, in our last conversation he shared with me that over the past couple of months, his sisters would make sure that they would check in on her almost every day. Fr. Joe set up a device called portal TV for video conferencing which has made it so much for his mom to communicate on a TV screen rather than tablet or smart phone.

While the family has found ways to better connect, what his sisters are noticing is that in their daily interactions with mom, they have found there is less and less to talk about. So, I asked Fr. Joe, what do they talk about? He replied, it usually ends up about food.

“What did you have for lunch today, mom?” “That’s great! Did you enjoy it?” “Mom, I making your stew in the crockpot tonight. I’ll make sure I drop it off for you and Joe.” Doesn’t that sound familiar?

Being shut down by COVID-19 has reduced our lives to the basics, that is, food. After we exchange pleasantries and hellos, receive assurances that everyone is safe and healthy, we more times than not get down to discussing food. What we are having for dinner? Exchange new dinner ideas. We focus on the basics in life such as food because food nourishes, sustains, comforts, consoles, and pulls us together around a table. Food is more than an item, an object, or a noun, it is an action.

The Good News of today’s Gospel is that Jesus tells us that our belief in Him as the Way, the Truth, and the Life leads us to eternal life. But notice carefully, Jesus makes it very clear that he is asking more than just belief, but to do His Works. He says, “Whoever believes in me will do the works that I do.”

In other words, BELIEVING is essential but we must also WORK in such a way to manifest God’s goodness, love, compassion and mercy in the world. And the place to produce results is where we live and work. Because if our faith does not make some impact on the ordinary things that we do day in and day out, it is doubtful whether that faith is tangible and visible.

On this 5th Sunday of Easter in which we celebrate as a nation our Moms, living and deceased, mother figures seen in our grandmothers, aunts, godmothers, and spiritual mothers in our lives, let’s get down to the basics when it comes to our faith, it is more than noun or idea, but an action.

So, let’s put that faith into action by making an impact in where we live or work by expressing a gesture of gratitude and appreciation to all Moms and share one of our mom’s favorite and memorable dish or recipe with another. At least it will provide some needed variety in our dinner menu plan for the week since we haven’t been able to go out to dinner for the past 6 weeks.
Blessed Mother’s Day!
Fr. Michael
10 May 2020

Please Note: For those who have not heard, Archbishop Sample announced great news on Tuesday, May 5 that he has approved the plan for reopening the parishes beginning May 9. With that said, Archbishop Sample is not going to open the parishes haphazardly as the health and safety all parishioners is paramount. In order to reopen, his plan has outlined check points that must be completed.

Even before the announcement, the parish staff and volunteers had already initiated calling all registered parishioners to verify and update contact information and confirm the preferred method of communication. Also, collecting data of how many parishioners at their own risk were interested in attending Mass.

Based upon the data collected, the next step is for us to look at our Mass schedule to see if we could accommodate with the 25-person limit per Mass or would we need to provide additional Masses during the week. Once we have determined a suitable weekly Mass Schedule we would have Fr. Jeff Meeuwsen, Vicar of our region, review it.

Next, we are to devise a signup system that is appropriate to our parish as the Archbishop is very sensitive to not exclude the disabled, those with limited or no internet access or those who are not tech savvy. A signup system is crucial as we are required to have a list of persons and their contact information for each Mass in the event that we need to assist Public Health Officials with the retracing process. As soon as we set up a signup system, we will implement it to allow parishioners to sign up in an orderly, fair, and equitable manner.

Finally, we are also must have a cleaning and disinfecting procedure with the sufficient PPE supplies on hand and in stock to ensure that our volunteers can clean the church after every Mass.

As soon as we complete this task list, we will reopen for the celebration of Masses. I ask for your continual patience and cooperation as the parish staff completes the calling process and as we progress, I will continue to communicate to you how to sign up for Mass and when we will be offering Mass.

This is very exciting news so I ask for your continual prayers for the parish staff and volunteers who are working diligently in this endeavor so we can return to a “new” normal.