

26 April 2020, Third Sunday of Easter

Dear Parishioners,

Christ is Risen, Alleluia! He is Risen indeed, Alleluia, Alleluia! I pray and hope this letter finds you doing well and healthy, in the midst of this most unique Easter Season. Even though Public Masses are suspended until further notice, Jesus is alive and He is Lord! Christ is still on His throne and may we all be encouraged that, as Saint John Paul II said, "We are an Alleluia People!" I wanted to send a letter to all of you, our "Saint Thomas More Parish Family", to personally thank you for your continued support during these unusual times. Many of you have remembered to mail in your offertory contributions and tithes. Again, Thank You! If you haven't yet, this may serve as a reminder to help us pay our bills. You may want to sign up for on-line regular giving through Vanco, or simply mail in your checks and/or envelope. You may also drop off your offertory at the Parish Office, which is currently open Tuesday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM.

As soon as we have more information about when Public Masses will resume we will communicate that on our parish website, Facebook page, in our bulletin, on our office answering machine, and posted on church doors. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 we have decided to cancel *MOREFEST* this year which was to be held on 20 June 2020. Also, this year we will not be having Catholic "Vacation Bible School" for the children. We will bring both back in June 2021. Please note that we do currently open the church for private prayer Tuesday through Friday from 8:00 AM until 11:00 AM and Saturday and Sunday from 3:00 PM until 5:00 PM. If you are feeling well, consider making a visit to the Most Blessed Sacrament. We sanitize the church each day after closing. As part of the precautions, when Public Masses resume we will continue to sanitize the church regularly, we will continue to omit the "exchange of peace" which is always optional for Mass, and the Chalices of the people, and we will not resume handshaking before or after Holy Mass. Verbal greetings will be the new norm (and perhaps an occasional, careful hug or elbow bump).

I would like to take this opportunity to announce some exciting news concerning Mass times for when we do resume Public Mass. The Daily Mass, which is usually Monday through Friday, will begin at 7:00 AM (instead of 6:40 AM). Confessions will be heard in the church starting at 3:00 PM on Saturdays and we will resume the Saturday Evening Mass, which counts for one's Sunday Obligation, at 4:00 PM. On Sundays, Masses will be offered starting at 8:00 AM, 10:00 AM and a *new time for Mass* starting at 7:30 PM. This 7:30 PM Mass will be a quiet "Said Mass" especially for those who needed to travel out of town, and need a Mass time "of last resort". I believe we will have the latest Mass available in the Pensacola area.

Please be assured of my daily prayers, and those of Father Casserly, our senior priest in residence. We continue to offer private Masses and we "remember you all at the Altar". We miss all of you and are looking forward to the time when we can come together again, observing precautions, to worship the Lord through the public Eucharistic Liturgy. In the meantime, let us keep the Paschal Feast of Fifty Days at home and remain united in prayer. Pentecost, the Fiftieth Day, will be celebrated on May 31, 2020. "May the God of encouragement fill you all with joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." (Romans 15:13)

Sincerely yours in the Risen Christ,

The Reverend Father Nicholas Schumm, Pastor