

March 30, 2020

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At St. Mary and St. Joseph our primary concern is the holiness, health and safety of our parishioners. We are praying for all who have been impacted by the current health crisis, especially the sick and their care givers. The spread of COVID-19 has truly impacted our parish, our community, and our country. We will continue to communicate with you about our parish events and activities as often as possible so that you are aware of what is going on at both Parishes.

Our primary role is to provide for the spiritual and pastoral needs of the faithful. Additionally, as members of the broader community, we are committed to participating in the larger response by our cities and state. Bishop Jenky's decision to dispense from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass, as well as the canceling or curtailing of all other liturgical events and gatherings, was based on the CDC and state government guidelines. Local priests are to provide for the needs of their parishioners within these parameters.

We must continue to pray and support those most vulnerable – the poor, those with less stable employment, and parents who need to work and are unable to find childcare. In a special way, we want to support the elderly, the sick, and shut-ins who may feel isolated and lonely. In the spirit of Lent, we must all embrace the works of mercy with zeal and to practice a spirit of gratitude and generosity to others.

Please know that we are committed to continuing the good work of our parishes and the Church at this time. We want to thank each of you for the many ways you support our mission, and ask that you please continue to support the work of our Church. Our parishes are dependent upon your weekly financial gifts to continue its ministries in this critical time of crisis when we are not able to go to Mass. Please use this time to transition to online giving or mail your weekly offertory donation to the parish office at St. Mary's, PO Box 769, Delavan, IL 61734. For online giving, use this direct link and select your Parish: <https://cdop.weshareonline.org/ws/opportunities/parishes>. This link is also on our website stmarydelavan.org. We are grateful for your contributions.

On that same note, this past weekend of March 28/29 was slated for the official kickoff of the Annual Diocesan Appeal. However, Bishop Jenky has postponed the appeal at this time. If you would like to learn more about the good works our diocese does, you are invited to visit cdop.org/ada2020 to watch the video, submit a prayer request, and/or make a donation.

I also ask you to be mindful of hackers that will surely try to take advantage of people during this crisis. Please know, I will never ask for any favor, request gift cards, or solicit any kind of financial information from you via text or email. If you do receive such a solicitation, it is not from me – it is a scam!

Join me in prayer for the repose of those who have died, for the recovery of those who are sick, for the strength of healthcare workers and caregivers, and for an end to this health crisis. Please be assured of my prayers for all of you, our parishioners, and know that we are here for you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Tim