



January 29, 2021

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Peace of Christ! I hope and pray that you are doing well. I thought it would be well to say hello and to give you an update on how things are going here with me at Shalom Center near Houston, Texas.

This is a very peaceful retreat/treatment center north of Houston in a beautifully wooded area. The campus' center is a beautiful chapel with the Blessed Sacrament, which is very fitting for why I am here on this medical sabbatical.

I'm feeling very well and rested. The schedule each week is consistently focused on the Mass, individual and group meetings and therapy, as well as regular meetings with doctors who have been helping track my health, which is very good. There is a lot of areas in which to go on long walks and we have exercise facilities.

I pray for you every day at Mass, Liturgy of the Hours, and during my Rosary. I miss you all dearly and am very much looking forward to returning home, hopefully soon as I'll be here until the latter part of February. When I speak with the Bishop in two weeks, I'll have a clear idea of my return date. I sure miss Montana and especially you, the faithful whom I love dearly.

Thank you so much for all of your prayers, cards, notes, emails, etc. That has been a source of great consolation during my time away. Your prayers are especially efficacious and consoling.

I'm also extremely grateful for your generosity to and care for those in our parish who suffer, such as Carl Hogman, Tim Spencer, Charlotte Kolb, and their dear families. I am in solidarity with you and them as we pray to Our Lord who is the Divine Physician to console and heal their bodies and console their kind hearts. I've been in touch with the Hogman's, Spencer's, and Kolb's and offered Mass for all of them and all of you at St. Richard this morning at Community Mass and will continue to do so.

I'd like to thank Colleen for being so great about holding down the fort, or should I say, holding "up" the fort. Ha. Don't know where that expression came from. I digress. Colleen has been great about forwarding correspondences as well as sweaters and coats in that I had the impression it was like summer down here. It's not. We even had mornings into the '30's. Also, thanks so much to Deacon Doug, Mary, Angie, Raven, Andrew, Tyler, Emma, and all who do such a wonderful job at St. Richard, as well as those who do quiet work for Our Lord for our Parish Family. Please know that you all remain in my thoughts and prayers and I'm so grateful for taking such great care of Frs. Bart and Stan.

In the Love of Christ,  
Fr. Raftis .