

FROM FATHER DAVE

There are many words we can use to describe this time pandemic. Some of those words include “unprecedented,” “surreal,” “crazy,” “strange,” and “dark” just to name a few. What makes this time so unusual is that it is marked by separation, isolation, and distancing. As human beings, however, we are not meant to be alone or distanced from one another. Nor are we meant to not see the smiles on each other’s faces. And yet, the distancing and mask-wearing are all made necessary for the protection of all.

I realize that in some cases that this whole issue has been politicized. In the end, it is about safety and mitigating the spread of this powerful poison. I want to personally thank each and every one of you for your compliance with directives. We are all in this together. It is imperative that we continue working together for the safety and protection of all. To that end, in addition to asking for a name and phone number for contact tracing purposes, we have begun doing temperature checks on those who attend the daily indoor Mass at Saint Alexis. Also, please note that the church is cleaned and sanitized after every service. The wearing of masks remains mandatory.

Saint Paul in today’s second reading from his Letter to the Romans offers us hope in this time of separation and isolation. Saint Paul tells us that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Nothing. Not even a pandemic can deprive us of God’s love for us.

If you have any doubts about this message, then I encourage you to just look at the crucifix in church or in your home. Jesus suffered and died for you and me. His love is poured out on that cross. Every time we gaze at the cross, we are reminded not only of his love for us but his closeness to us in our suffering.

The cross is also a sure sign of strength for us. When my siblings and I were just children my parents would bless us every night before sleep. They would make the Sign of the Cross over us and three times say, “Passion of Christ strengthen you.” They continued to bless us even in our adulthood when we would leave the home or get in the car for a family vacation. All of us siblings continue this practice. May the passion of Christ strengthen us all in this time of pandemic!

Tuesday, August 4, 2020, is the Memorial of Saint John Vianney, the patron Saint of parish priests. This is the feast day for all parish priests. It is also a reminder for us as parish priests to aspire every day to be a holy priest like Saint John Vianney. On this day Bishop Zubik will celebrate the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral. Because of the pandemic, the Chrism Mass which is usually held on Holy Thursday was postponed. Only a small group of priests will be permitted to attend this gathering. This is the day when the Bishop consecrates the Sacred Chrism and blesses the oil of the catechumen and oil of the sick. A representative group from each parish receives the oils which are returned to the parish for use during that year.

The Chrism Mass is also a day in which the priests renew their priestly promises before the Bishop. Although Father Will and I will not be part of the select group attending the Chrism Mass that day, we renew our promises to God and to you, his holy people. Please pray for us. Know that we pray for you every day.

Have a blessed week!

