

Dear Parishioners,

I hope that you are all doing well and staying healthy and safe. These are indeed incredibly uncertain and strange times, but I wish to reassure you of God's presence and love in your lives at this time. God is here, God is with you, God loves you, and God will see us through!

A couple of important updates for you this week. First, we **will** hold the next Basics of Catholicism this next Tuesday, November 3rd, at 7pm. Even though it is election day, only a couple of our regular participants have indicated that they will not be able to be present. This next class of the Basics of Catholicism will be from 7pm - 8pm next Tuesday, November 3rd. I will be present in-person in the social hall at Holy Spirit Church in Two Harbors, and as always, any parishioner can participate through Zoom. You can contact either Cassi in Two Harbors or Cindy in Silver Bay for more information or to sign up if you have not yet done so.

Second, as the calendar year begins to draw towards a close, please remember that our goal for monies raised in each parish for the United Catholic Appeal is coming due. In both parishes, we have significant ground to cover regarding meeting our goal. Roughly speaking, we still need to raise approximately \$9,000.00 at Holy Spirit to reach our goal for the year, and we need to raise approximately \$3,000.00 to meet our goal at St. Mary's. Please remember everyone that UCA funds are directly used by the Diocese of Duluth to fund the programs and offices which benefit the faithful of the Diocese. This includes very important missions such as diocesan youth activities, the men's and women's conferences, the marriage tribunal which processes annulment cases, and many other ministries. The diocese depends upon its people to generously give of their financial resources to make the mission to evangelize and proclaim the Gospel of Christ possible. Please, if you have not yet given to the UCA appeal this year, please do so. And even if you have already given, please prayerfully consider whether it is possible for you to give further. Especially as our diocese continues to emerge from bankruptcy, our local Church needs your help now more than ever! Thank you!

Finally, many of us are undoubtedly aware of the media stories last week that spoke about our Holy Father, Pope Francis', remarks about the establishment of legally recognized civil unions for persons of the same biological sex. Because these remarks and the reports of the media have caused a considerable amount of confusion and uncertainty, I have done my best to try to explain and unpack what has been said and what happened in this regard. I have done so in the attached document. I encourage you to please read it.

Please know of my prayers for all of you during these difficult times. Let us hold each other up in prayer and support, and may God's peace flood every human heart! God bless you!

Fr. Steve Laflamme
Pastor