

26 April 2020

Dear St. Charles Parishioner:

This is the Third Sunday of Easter. In our current circumstances, we may be getting discouraged or disappointed. Continued “self-isolation” and faithful “social distancing” can also take their toll. In my calls to parishioners this week, several of the elderly indicated that they had not left their homes in the last month. Their nearby children, or kind friends and neighbors, do the shopping and run errands. Several folks commented about the elected official who proclaimed “there are things more important than living!” He meant, of course, material things should take precedence. He is welcome to his opinion, mistaken though he is. “Living” is still pretty important to me and, I am sure, to you. In another place, we were told, “grandparents should be willing to die” so that the stock market could resume its climb and benefit the children and grandchildren. Ask the families of the 49,000 Americans who have died from the virus: “would you want your loved ones back or would you prefer a hefty stock portfolio?” I know what I would say. We can be an impatient people; the enemy we face has its own schedule. We would be wise to rely on the medical experts. In today's Gospel, after reasonable discussion and prayerful insight, the disciples recognized the calming presence of the Lord. We modern day disciples should do the same.

Although many things in parish life may be off-schedule, there is one date--assigned by the diocese--that cannot be changed. Our seminarian intern, Scott Swinerton, has come to the end of his time with us. Scott and his classmates working in other parishes complete their seven month stay this Sunday, April 26. The seminary was closed, due to the pandemic, in mid-March. The other seminarians have also been learning “on-line at a distance.” I told Scott he is welcome to stay with us until the end of the seminary academic year on May 8. We thank Scott, especially for his work with RCIA, with our Day School and PCRFB students, and--most recently--for the many phone calls to parishioners. We wish him well and assure him of our prayerful support as he moves toward priestly ordination in 2022.

Father Larry Bayer, retired pastor of Parma's St Brigid of Kildare Parish and former associate pastor of St Charles 1971-1976, has been the faithful celebrant at our Tuesday and Thursday 8:30am Mass for many years. Father was taken seriously ill ten days ago; after some hospital time, he is currently undergoing extensive physical therapy. He informs me that he will then become a resident at Parma's Mount Alverna Home. Fr Bayer indicates that he can no longer help at St Charles. We thank Fr Bayer for his many years of service and we promise him our prayers for a complete recovery. Father Lou Thomas is also progressing well; he plans to return to St Charles the first of May.

This Monday I have scheduled a meeting of the parish staff. I have asked them to bring their ideas for any additional steps we might take to give you better service. If you would like to submit a comment or a thought, please send it my way to jtceire@aol.com.

Our Mass intentions are fully booked for 2020. During this pandemic, two Masses are offered daily at St Charles: one Mass is said privately and the other is livestreamed at 11:00am. So the 7:00am and the 7:00pm daily Mass intentions are remembered at those two Masses. Both intentions are announced before the 11:00am Mass. The 8:30am daily Mass intentions will be re-scheduled to weekends after public Masses are again allowed.

As mentioned above, we will continue to livestream daily Mass on Monday thru Saturday at 11:00am. Sunday Mass will also be livestreamed to you at 11:00am. Although most parish churches are in lockdown mode, St Charles Church is open for personal prayer and devotion every day from 7:00am to 7:00pm. Our dedicated and hard-working maintenance crew sanitizes the church every day.

This Wednesday, April 29, we will livestream a Festival of Praise from 7:15 until 8:30pm. Tune in and enjoy some great music, Scripture, prayer, and reflection. It will be found at <http://www.stcharlesonline.org/>

The offertory total for April 19 was \$29,244.75. The parish is blessed by your great generosity. Thank you!