5 July 2020

Dear St. Charles Parishioner:

This is Fourth of July weekend; traditionally our mid-summer holiday as well as our national birthday. Two hundred forty-four years ago, our patriot ancestors pledged "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor" in crafting a document declaring our independence from England. But brave words were not enough; there followed seven years of struggle in the Revolutionary War. With our freedom secured, a republican form of government was proposed and then achieved by democratic means, We know the names of those heroes: Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison... The list could go on. We call them the Founding Fathers.

They were not perfect; few people are. A wise observer once put it this way "every saint has a past...and every sinner has a future." *But they are our history.* It is sad today that their monuments and statues are being vandalized, defaced, torn down, or demolished. The objection seems to be that people of the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries did not have the values and the understanding of the twenty-first century; therefore, the memories of them should be erased. That seems an unfair and an unjust way to judge those who went before us.

I am seventy years old and I have seen, in my life, some major changes in society. I think it is honest to say that, in 2020, we are a more tolerant, more accepting, less prejudiced, and more compassionate people than we were fifty years ago. True, we have not yet overcome all the barriers and boundaries that may divide us. But our history should not be destroyed, it should be used to educate: *"this is what people believed back then, but we know better now."* Another wise person once wrote, *"those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it."*

Where do we draw the line? How long before there is a demand to go through our libraries and find those books with unpopular, outmoded, and outdated beliefs? When will we start the book-burning? Sad to say, but unless saner heads prevail, *just maybe it could happen here!*

Father Chris will be away this week. I will be here by myself and I have to keep the morning open for funerals, so the Sunday July 5 online Mass at 11:00am will be the last livestream Mass until Sunday July 15 at 11:00am. In short, no daily 11:00am Mass Monday July 6 through Saturday July 11. Father Chris, enjoy your week!

Looking for a booster shot during trying times? Check Cindy Zalek's *"Cindy's Corner"* and Brian Pelcin's *"Cup of Joe" for Your Soul* on our St Charles Parish website. Just click the icon on the homepage. And don't forget to check out *Children's Liturgy of the Word* each week.

Last August we marked out Wednesday, July 8 to Sunday, July 12 for our Eighty-eighth Annual Homecoming Carnival. Everything was in place when the pandemic hit on Friday, March 13. By early May, we knew that, for the health and well-being of all, Carnival 2020 would have to be canceled.

The Carnival Committee shifted to a parish-wide Summer Raffle with two steps; a June mailing of tickets followed by a July mailing during Carnival week. The "blue and white" tickets went out a month ago. This week will follow the second mailing of "ivory and pink" tickets. If you can, please consider purchasing/selling the second set of tickets with the money you would have spent on the Carnival grounds.

Additional "blue and white" and "ivory and pink" tickets are available from the Parish Office. Two Step 2020 Raffle proceeds will pay for the new security/surveillance systems, exterior and interior, in our Parish Halls and Parish Activity Center; additional chromebooks for school; and the equipment to livestream Mass from our church to the elderly, ill, and homebound.

There are seven more weekly $500 drawings for the Seller's Appreciation Raffle. Plus, sell all four sheets of tickets and you are entered in a Spectacular Mystery Drawing. The Two Step Raffle Drawing will take place on Sunday, August 16.

Many thanks for your continued generosity to our parish. The collection for June 28 totaled $20,314.28!

Father Carlen