

April 8, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

I hope this letter finds you social distancing from people, but cuddling up to our Lord in your *secret place*.

At every Mass, I am praying for you, for Pope Francis, for Bishop Burbidge, and for our President and Vice President. I agree with one parishioner whose letter came today: *Our President seems to be moving heaven and earth to prevent as many deaths as possible.*

Tomorrow we begin our observance of the 2020 Sacred Triduum. You will be very present to me throughout the sacred solemn liturgies, as you were to me on Palm Sunday.

While we never got our order of Palm Sunday palms, I am happy to tell you that we will be getting our Easter flowers. I learned today that they will be arriving tomorrow on Holy Thursday and our dear Paula Guerrieri has assembled a dedicated crew of volunteers to help her make our sanctuary as beautiful this Easter as it has been for past Easters. When you come into our sanctuary to pray Easter morning our Lord will be there to greet you in the Blessed Sacrament, surrounded by the flowers we'd ordered long before the COVID-19 takeover of Lent. May the sight and scent of them brighten our days with beauty and hope as we begin the Easter Season. They are a gift from Our Lord to us, or they would not be here.

To be sure, we didn't get the Lent we thought we would. I'm half tempted to say that God took things into His own hands, but I would be mistaken, and would only perpetuate the past illusion that we have control over the course of our lives. Am I starting to sound like the worst of this crisis is over? I don't mean to, but the arrival of Easter flowers does momentarily reintroduce that sense of normalcy that was taken away from us on the 16th of March. On top of that, I received a second letter today, a fine, handwritten note from one of our Saint William of York School students that put a smile on my face as big as Long Island. She says she can't wait to see me again. (That's understandable.)

Can you imagine what our first Mass together again will be like? I can; it will be reverent, beautiful, and deeply appreciated.

Until then, I send you my blessing once more through the air, while remaining always

Gratefully yours in Christ,

Father DeMartino