

March 20, 2020

Dear St. Peter family;

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God and the Peace and Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you and your families.

In these unprecedented times, I am reminded of these words:

"For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, 'Do not fear, I will help you.'" Isaiah 41:13

Our Lenten journey this year is like no other. Suffice it to say, I do not think any of us thought we would be giving up this much: cancellation of all public Masses, limited access to the Holy Eucharist for adoration and prayer, limited Confessions and limitations on gathering as a community. As Catholics we are having to FAST from what is not just a luxury but from what is essential to us as a people of Faith. The words of our Lord strikingly resound within my own mind and heart: *"The day will come, however, when the groom will be taken away from them; on that day they will fast."* Mark 2:20

Thankfully this time of restrictions, due to the Coronavirus, is temporary. However, not being able to freely adore His presence in the Most Holy Eucharist and most especially not being able to receive His Body and Blood for this period of time, calls us to the words of Jesus noted above and to recall the times we may have taken His presence with us in the Holy Eucharist for granted. The question is: How can we use this Lenten experience to return to what matters?

Each of us are having very different experiences and emotional responses to fast moving societal changes we are having to deal with. Our family life, faith life, work life, recreational life and social life has changed, and still so much is still there and that is why we must be creative and intentional about nurturing all of them in order to keep a healthy balance going forward.

In my capacity as your "spiritual father," I want to reassure each of you that you are missed and remain in my daily Masses and personal prayers. I speak for Fr. Istre who is doing the same. These changes are difficult for us as we know they are difficult for each of you. We will get through this!

We all must be intentional in observing the Sabbath and daily prayer. This is how we remain connected to Him and each other: *"I am the vine; you are the branches.*

Whoever remains in Me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without Me you can do nothing.” John 15:5 Remember, the restrictions to gather as Jesus’ disciples on the Sabbath, and the lifting of the Sunday obligation to attend a public Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, does not excuse us from uniting ourselves with our Eucharistic Lord and the community of believers throughout the world in the greatest prayer to the Father that Jesus has left us. We do this through a “Spiritual Communion.” Those with internet, radio and television capabilities are strongly encouraged to view/hear the celebration of Mass each Sunday and weekdays when possible. Opportunities are listed on our website and at www.diolaf.org. As a family, please also consider a half hour of meditation on the Sunday/daily Mass readings and the praying of a family Rosary. An option is to pray the Rosary each evening on EWTN at 8:30 p.m. This is also a perfect time to establish a prayer space or altar in your home where you and your family can come together to pray. Even group prayer conference calls are a creative way to pray together with those who cannot be physically with you.

I ask that you occasionally review our parish website at: www.sprcc.org and our parish Facebook page for updates and announcements. Without email addresses for everyone, this is the most effective way to communicate with you.

As we are reminded from Isaiah, it is the Lord who holds us and who will help us. Here is where we walk by Faith: *“Jesus, I trust in you!”*

With prayers for your good health,
Fr. Mark P. Ledoux
Pastor