

CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK

53 ST. PATRICK'S PLACE STATEN ISLAND, NY 10306

March 29, 2020

Dear Parishioner,

We are about one week into social distancing (an oxymoron) and many of us are experiencing a totally different way of life. We are living much the same way as Padre Pio Mandato lives in rural Pennsylvania, coming out occasionally to celebrate a Healing Mass or conduct a Mission. Of course he chose being a hermit as his way of life, but it was imposed on us by the strong suggestion of the state and the fear of spreading the virus.

So, we are alone, isolated, afraid of spreading the virus to people we love – and wondering how long this will last. What do we do? We watch cable news. We go to the internet. We get the various estimates; anywhere from 8 weeks to 18 months. And then we worry. What if this happens? What if that doesn't happen? We can spend all our time living in the future instead of living ONE DAY AT A TIME.

A prayer that is usually helpful in times like these is the Serenity Prayer, written by a minister, Reinhold Niebuhr in the early 20th Century.

God grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
And wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world
As it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
If I surrender to Your Will
So I may be reasonably happy in this life
And supremely happy with You
Forever and ever in the next.

We can't really change what is happening so we better accept it.

There are some small things we can do:

- get enough supplies
- help older and disabled people and our families,
- put our trust in God, and
- pray

And then wait patiently for God to make all things right.

As I take "one day at a time" I make time

- to pray
- to exercise
- to read spiritual books and history books
- to watch netflix
- to watch as little cable news as possible (it depresses me)
- to call friends
- to eat with Fr. Victor
- and to remember that I am not alone Jesus is with me all day

If I get too far ahead of myself I get overwhelmed and fearful. My job is to live in the present. The future, after I do a little planning, belongs to God.

Try remembering to live "one day at a time" this week and, when you have trouble doing it ask God for help.

God bless us and protect St. Patrick's Parish, School and Religious Education and all our relatives and friends.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey D. Conway". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Jeff Conway, Pastor