

Sunday, June 14, 2020  
The Solemnity of the Body & Blood of Christ



My Dear Fellow Parishioners,

I want to share a few of my thoughts and musings with you on three topics: 1) Issues to consider as regards Saint Mary Magdalen Parish as we continue to deal with the reality of the global pandemic; 2) Parish offertory and finances; 3) Racism in America.

1) Some of you have asked, when will our parish resume full operations? When the Bishop gave parishes the “green light” to begin to reopen he left it up to the local pastor to decide how, what, and when. I decided that we should open slowly to give us time to adjust to the new reality and to give me time to consult and discuss what and how and when we will fully reopen. My intention was and is to ensure the safety of all parishioners as we reopen the church and move through this process.

Having said that, beginning after the fourth of July weekend, I envision that we will start to move toward a “full open” with restrictions. I do not want to make any firm decisions until I have a chance to consult with our Parish Staff, the Parish Advisory Council, and the Parish Reopening Task Force.

As soon as those three consults occur, I will be in a better position to inform you what to expect going forward. There are still many uncertainties regarding the future, so I once again ask you to be calm and patient and understanding which you almost always are.

2) Thank you to all of you who have continued to remain faithful to weekly offertory. Even though we have returned to church – with only one Mass at the moment – we continue to depend upon your faithfulness to your offertory commitment. Without your support we would be unable to pay our staff and meet our other ongoing financial obligations. Because of your generosity we are currently “holding our own.” In areas in which we are able, we have significantly reduced expenditures and we continue to examine new opportunities for savings. Once again thank you very much.

3) We are living in unusual times, very unusual times, which of course you already know. Not only are we still in the midst of a global deadly pandemic but our country has been thrust into turmoil as a result of continued glaring pervasive racism.

Our country was established on the principle that “all men (people) are created equal.” That has always been understood as a nonnegotiable principle of our society, proudly and courageously established by our founding fathers who were themselves, like all of us, flawed and fallible people but who together rose above their weaknesses to establish doctrines and truths for our fledging country that they believed were “self-evident.”

We stand at a critical juncture – our communities, our cities, our townships, our states, and our nation have an opportunity to make real and effective changes.

As Catholic Christians and as citizens, we can make a difference. By our decisive action but most of all by our prayer we can be a part of this historic opportunity. I am not in any way suggesting that we participate in the active protests. But I *am* suggesting that through prayer we can, if needed, readjust our attitudes, prejudices, biases, and preconceptions. I am not completely certain what the solution to the current situation is, but I *do* know that what we are currently experiencing is, no matter how well intentioned, *not* the solution.

By faith and prayer, we can help facilitate the new day that is dawning in our great land. I encourage you to ponder the words of our Bishop, Francis Malooly. His words ring true and are a poignant message to all of the people of the Diocese of Wilmington. Bishop Malooly said: “I express my sincere condolences to the family of Mr. Floyd. I pray for the repose of Mr. Floyd’s soul, and (*the souls of all those who have died unjustly*) that God will send comfort and consolation to his family. While I support those who seek justice through peaceful demonstrations, we must keep in mind what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. taught us about non-violence. It is easy to lash out in anger when confronted by injustice, but the easy thing to do is often not the right thing to do. Please join me in prayer that the Holy Spirit will guide us to lasting, peaceful solutions to the problems we face as a society. Racism, brutality, murder, violence, bigotry, and disenfranchisement are not Gospel values and must be condemned in the strongest terms. Let us proceed as brothers and sisters, beloved children of God.”

Please hold our nation in prayer as we seek new ways to resolve the crisis that we face. As always, as people of faith, we must believe that God is near and that the Lord is walking with us.

Let us continue to pray for one another as we continue to work through the challenges we face.

God bless you,  
*Father Kirk*