

March 21, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

If you feel like this has been the strangest week of your life, you're not alone! "Social distancing" is counter-intuitive for us because God made us for relationships. This is especially true for us Catholics because our life is centered around the Sunday gathering, celebrating the Eucharist, and receiving Holy Communion.

Yet necessitating this "distancing" is the very real threat of COVID-19 and the risk it poses to the health of everyone in our community. It is important that all of us listen carefully to the cautions and recommendations provided by our public health officials. I want to add my voice to theirs and I urge you, if at all possible, to isolate yourselves at home for the next 15 days.

In lieu of our regular Masses this weekend and next, I invite you to join me "virtually" for Holy Mass on Sunday at 8:00 AM live-streamed from the Dominican Center Chapel. [Click here to view the Mass on ROL's Facebook page.](#) Although you will not be able to receive Holy Communion, you can make an *Act of Spiritual Communion* which expresses our faith in Christ and His Presence in the Eucharist. In this prayer, we ask Christ to unite Himself with us.

Spiritual communion needs no special instruction; it only requires the same disposition as the actual reception of the sacrament and a turning to Jesus with the heart. No particular prayer or formulary is required; however, to help focus a proper intention, recitation of a prayer is suggested. One of the most popular is that composed by St. Alphonsus Liguori:

*My Jesus,  
I believe that you are present in the Blessed Sacrament.  
I love you above all things  
and I desire you with all my heart.  
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,  
I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace you as if you were already in my heart  
and unite myself to you completely.  
Please do not let me ever be separated from you.*

You can mail your weekly offering to the church, deposit it with the candle donations by the Blessed Virgin Mary in the church, or better yet, [click here to donate online.](#) Your continued financial stewardship is important during this time, and I can't thank you enough for remembering the church.

If you do go out for food and supplies, I would ask that you continue to show charity for those in need by bringing some donations of canned and non-perishable food to the Parish Hall. I anticipate the need in our community to increase exponentially and our area Food Banks will be critical to meeting people's basic needs.

The website will be updated frequently during the week, so please check back often for information, helpful links and resources, and most of all, encouragement. **YOU ARE NOT ALONE!** Jesus is close to you with his strength and protection. I'm praying for you. Our whole parish is praying for you. We will get through this together.

In Christ's love,

***Fr. William***