

April 17, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

They devoted themselves to the teaching of the Apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. (Acts 2:42-43)

As we enter the second Sunday of Easter and Divine Mercy Sunday, we are reminded from the book of Acts that the early followers had four main spiritual foundations: the teachings of the Apostles, communal life, breaking of bread, and prayer. Through these foundations, great signs were experienced. In present times we understand these foundations differently. Our trust in the guidance of the Holy Spirit upon the successors of the Apostles, especially Pope Francis, is a sign of great hope for the whole world to encounter. Pope Francis has witnessed the struggle that we all currently experience but has also offered us an awesome example of humility as he shares with the world the joy of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a call that we all should uniquely witness.

Some of us may be struggling with the foundation of communal life. It is our nature to desire being in communion with our family, church, and the broader community. We currently experience communal life differently as we follow the stay at home order. However, challenging as this maybe, it invites us to practice patience, discipline, and love. It reminds us of our call to provide our neighbors with support and encouragement through different forms of communication. It creates a sense of global unity with all peoples of the world as we are truly in this together.

The early Christians gathered in their homes and practiced the breaking of the bread as a central foundation. As we gather in our homes, we are called to experience the breaking of the bread as a spiritual communion. Our aching desire to experience the source and summit of our spiritual life has strengthened our faith and commitment to doing our part in combating the spread of this virus. God knows the depths of our hearts and comes to us uniquely at this time. He forgives, heals, and gives us His grace to sustain us as our compassionate Father. In the Gospel this weekend, Jesus in the midst of his disciples says "Peace be with you." In our own practices of spiritual communion we share in this same peace that unites us.

Through the prayers of all denominations, we are knocking at the Father's door, seeking and asking for spiritual wisdom be bestowed upon our ecclesiastic and civic leaders as they make policies that safeguard life and guide us moving forward. Prayers of spiritual protection are requested for medical professionals and necessary workers who are on the front lines. Prayers of healing are requested for the sick, especially those who are severely suffering from the Coronavirus, and the loved ones who cannot be at their side. Prayers for necessary resources are requested for those financially affected during this unprecedented time. All of these prayers are made with great hope and trust in the Divine Mercy of Jesus. Also we must remember to say each day prayers of gratitude for the blessings we receive and ensure they are flooding the heavenly ear of our God.

As we cry out like Thomas, “My Lord and my God”, a statement of faith and hope, we continue with these spiritual foundations that formed the early Church and are present with us today. Let us be steadfast in relying on the teachings of the Apostles, communal life, the breaking of bread, and of prayers. This Easter season we celebrate differently the Resurrection of our Lord. We trust in his divine mercy to support us through any darkness we may experience and shine light upon the hope that the empty tomb signifies.

I would like to thank all those who helped record and post online Masses and services these past few weeks. Also, I appreciate the many words of gratitude for making these recordings available. Saying Mass in this form is not easy for me, but I truly hope that they are meaningful to you and your family. We will continue to provide them. I’m truly grateful for the financial support that many of you continue to contribute to the parish during this time. We added the ability to use credit cards as a new option for online giving, accessible via the parish website. Contributions can also be mailed or dropped in the mail slot on the parish office door. We are now posting the weekly collections through the website to provide an understanding of how the parish is doing financially. Thank you for your generosity and support.

Fr. Deo and I are still gathering a couple times each day to check in. However, we are realizing that we run out of things to talk about quickly. I can only imagine what some of you may be experiencing! I pray for you daily, and as Pope Francis says, “don’t forget to pray for me.”

Easter Joy to YOU!!!

Fr. Workman
Pastor

P.S. Saint James offertory envelopes are available outside the office door. Please adhere to safety practices.