19 March 2020

Solemnity of Saint Joseph

Dear Parishioners,

During this season of Lent communities across the world are challenged in a way they haven’t experienced in recent times. The COVID-19 pandemic calls us all to see our lives differently. Though many things change daily, our faith does not. I ask you to join with me in praying the rosary daily for the end of this pandemic. Throughout history the world has faced and overcome many challenges, and uniting in prayer is our best weapon against this virus at this present moment. Jesus says “Come to me, all you who are weary and find life burdensome, and I will refresh you. (Mt 11:28).

All parish activities at this time have been suspended, and we are not permitted to offer public Mass. I encourage you to enter spiritual communion through other forms of media. The Diocese is now livestreaming Mass daily at 9:30 a.m. on the diocese website, and the weekend TV Mass will be available on the diocesan website starting at 4 p.m. Saturdays. Mass can also be seen on Fox 8 WJW at 6 a.m. Sundays. Those with Cox Cable can view the Mass at 11:30 a.m. Sundays on channel 45. EWTN is also available.

In addition to Mass, I invite you to continue our Lenten Friday practices with those in your home, including Rosary at 12 p.m. and Divine Mercy at 3 p.m. Know I’ll be praying alongside you from St. Clement. Apps and websites like Hallow provide excellent guided prayers on demand, and the FORMED library offers video and audio content for both children and adults.

The parish office is closed during this time. We are checking emails and voicemails on a regular basis. I have asked the staff to do as much work from home as possible. Fr. Deogratias and I are making things work. (We are still getting along!) The Diocese has released procedures for the sacramental care of the faithful, and most activities have been postponed. Diocesan procedures will be posted on our website.

With the closure of so many businesses and organizations, the financial strain is yet to be understood. Like you, I am making adjustments to the parish finances. The Diocese is providing us with guidelines regarding employees and other parish responsibilities. As you know, the income of the parish is primarily derived from the Sunday offertory. Without Mass, this will limit our finances. Those who can continue to support the parish during this difficult time, I humbly request that you sign up for online giving through the parish website, mail your contribution to the parish office, or drop it through the parish office mail slot. All contributions of any amount are always greatly appreciated.

This is an unprecedented time for all of us. I encourage you to remember your neighbors and family members, especially the most vulnerable. Take actions that keep them and you safe. Reach out to them with a phone call or video chat – this one simple gesture can brighten someone’s day.

We have the powerful statement “In God we trust.” Let us together strengthen that trust through prayer and mutual support.

Yours in Christ

Fr. Joseph G. Workman

Pastor