

Happy Sunday, Team Grace! We continue to celebrate the Lord's Resurrection during this Easter Season! Alleluia! He is Risen!!

I'd like to begin by thanking everyone for the outpouring of love and support that I received for my birthday this past week. Thank you, Team Grace!

This weekend, we resume a Sunday Mass schedule, with Masses on Saturday evening's at 4 PM and 5:30 PM and on Sunday's at 7 AM, 9 AM, 11 AM, and 12:30 PM. Please note that our 11 AM Mass will be live streamed. This will be our Mass schedule during the transition period. Please note that the 7 AM and 12:30 PM Masses are temporary. Once we resume our regular Mass schedule, these Masses will be discontinued. I want to remind everyone that the Bishop's dispensation is still in effect. *If you are uncomfortable with coming back to Mass, then please stay home and join us on our live streaming.* I know this applies to many people of older age and/or those who have pre-existing conditions.

Recently, some parishioners have asked me to clarify my explanation of the parish needing to get its bearings, rebuild, and heal. As a further explanation of my comments, I'd like to place them within the context of our current state of affairs, namely, our staff is now smaller, our volunteer base has been cut by half (and is now non-existent in some places) since many are uncomfortable with returning to ministry, we are restricted in the use of our building (especially since our worship, administration, and other activities are all within one building), and our interactions are still marked by social distancing. And so, we need to adjust our previous way of parish life according to these new circumstances.

In addition, the sacraments of healing (Confession and Anointing of the Sick) and Holy Communion have been suspended, and people are in great need of these graces. The consequences of sin have gone unhealed. We will need to address the availability of Confession, the Anointing, and other spiritual resources. In addition, some parishioners have lost their businesses, some are now unemployed, some have lost loved ones in the northeast, people have been isolated, many have been scared for months, and many are asking deep spiritual questions and are confused about why God would allow such a modern-day plague to happen. This needs some healing and some biblical instruction!

We have been an isolated and dispersed community for two months. We have a lot of work to do as we come back together. Our parish life will have to adjust to our new state of affairs. Regrettably, this pandemic will not suddenly disappear from our world. Things will get better, but it will be slow. And our parish life will have to mirror this slow return. And so, we need to get our bearings, heal, and rebuild. We need to evaluate what's safe, assess what we can do, and then do our best as a parish community.

I hope that explains my comments and my vision for this transitional period as your pastor.

More updates next week. Oremus pro invicem (let's pray for one another)!