

PASTOR'S UPDATE TO PARISHIONERS – D (3/23/20)

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PASTORAL MESSAGE TO PARISHIONERS FROM FR. FERGUSON

Greetings!

Things are getting more "interesting" with the Coronavirus saga! With our Governor's declaration of a "stay-at-home" order effective today, we will have to see how much further our lives will be impacted in the coming days and weeks. These are definitely challenging times. Let's stay strong and support each other as fellow disciples, placing our trust entirely into the hands of Jesus our Good Shepherd!

Just a brief update today. Below I highlight only the things which have changed since last Friday. Please refer to "Update – C" for information on tech-based Masses and devotions, including our Cluster 3:00 Devotions. One important change to these local devotions is noted in the section below called "Developments in our Cluster Spiritual Opportunities".

Also, please note some important changes under "Parish Logistics" in light of the Governor's order.

Thanks for all your help, and let me know if you have any questions! I plan to send out my next update on Sunday.

Our Mother Mary, Patron of our Hardin County Parishes, Pray for Us!

- Fr. Bill Ferguson, Pastor

THOUGHTS FOR OUR PARISH CHILDREN BY "JACKIE", THE PASTOR'S CAT



Hi boys and girls! My name is "Jackie", and, as you know, I am Father Ferguson's cat! It's tough to stay inside so much, isn't it? Of course, you know that the grown-ups are trying to keep you safe from the bad virus going around trying to make people sick. But it's no fun to be cooped up inside all the time. It's tough for us cats, too. I wish I could go outside more and chase the squirrels, chew on the grass, taunt the neighborhood dogs, and play with some of my friends from Kitty School. But, unfortunately, I am stuck inside because of that bad virus. But it's forced me to think of fun things to do inside. Inside, I can spend more time with my loved ones like Father Ferguson. He and I have been having a staring-contest-tournament.....I am ahead of him 5-3. I have also been taking up a new hobby learning more tuna-baking recipes. I love making tuna lasagna now! Plus, I have more time now to read great books, like the timeless classics such as "The Cat in the Hat" and "Dewey: The Small Town Library Cat Who Touched the World." Most importantly, I've been giving more time to Jesus by praying to Him more often. And that's the biggest help with getting through this tough time. Jesus helps me to know that He is always here to help me no matter how difficult things can get. So, why not pray to Jesus today and ask Him how you can make the most out of your time at home this week! What fun things will you do and learn? Have a "purr"-fect week!

LIVE-STREAMED CLUSTER MASS – FOLLOW UP

Thanks to all who viewed our live-streamed Cluster Mass yesterday! I appreciate all the positive comments I received. Thanks to Deacon Mike and Steve Johnson for assisting. The Diocese only permits three people to be involved on-site with such live-streaming Masses (for social-distancing efforts), so I appreciate everyone's patience and understanding with not being able to physically come on-site and join in.

For those who were not able to join in "live" yesterday at home, the video of the Mass is available on that same new YouTube site. Click on the same link we gave you last time (reproduced below) to watch the Mass.

Unless we are given updated directives by the Diocese in the meantime, the intention is to do the same thing next Sunday, again at 9:00 a.m. (Perhaps we can also watch by livestream Father having coffee and doughnuts afterwards by himself, but we'll see... 😊)

One parishioner wanted me to remind folks that if you do not have a laptop, you might try beaming the video from your smartphone to your TV (if you have a "Smart TV") to see a bigger image, by using the "hotspot" feature on your phone (your cell phone service provider can set you up with a "hotspot", which beams an internet signal from

your cell phone to any other device). (I imagine you can also get a special physical cord to do the same connection, but I'm not the one to ask tech questions.....)

The link for our YouTube channel is : <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVxcsTyz-ukNpEDHVkQWKVw>

DEVELOPMENTS IN OUR CLUSTER SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES

ADJUSTMENT TO THE 3:00 DAILY TECH-BASED CLUSTER DEVOTIONS SCHEDULE

The following will be the new schedule for our tech-based Cluster Devotions group; mainly it adds the Friday Stations at an evening hour:

Monday - Divine Mercy Chaplet @ 3

Tuesday - Divine Mercy Chaplet @ 3

Wednesday - Rosary @ 3

Thursday - Divine Mercy Chaplet @ 3

Friday - Divine Mercy Chaplet @ 3, PLUS Stations of the Cross @ 6

"And we can and will continue to make adjustments as we go to try and help meet the needs of the parishioners of both parishes as much as we can at this time, esp. if this goes on longer than initial projections." Again to sign up, email Steve at sjohnsonpv@gmail.com.

NEW ON-LINE CLUSTER SPIRITUAL-SOCIAL GROUPS

This time of "social distancing" can be a chance to rediscover the value of silence and solitude and "slowing down", an important aspect of life, as centuries of Saints have taught us. It's a chance to rediscover ourselves and rediscover the quiet voice of God in our midst.

But for those who may be struggling with being isolated, or beating the "Stay-At-Home-Order" winter blahs, there is an opportunity for faith-filled social interaction. I've been asked to pass along the following: "Men's and Women's Cluster Fellowship Time (Online): If you'd like to join in a men's or women's fellowship group online, please email Ann Johnson at acjohnson@alumni.nd.edu. A time for meetings will be set based on interest and best times for the groups. All you need to join is a smartphone, tablet, or computer! Instructions on how to join will be provided."

THIS WEEK'S MASS READINGS

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| Mon 3/23 | Isaiah 65:17-21; John 4:43-54 |
| Tues 3/24 | Ezekiel 47:1-9, 12; John 5:1-16 |
| Wed 3/25 | (Solemnity of Annunciation) Isaiah 7:10-14; 8:10; |
| Hebrews 10:4-10; Luke 1:26-38 | |
| Thus 3/26 | Exodus 32:7-14; John 5:31-47 |
| Fri 3/27 | Wisdom 2:1a, 12-22; John 7:1-2, 10, 25-30 |
| Sat 3/28 | Jeremiah 11:18-20; John 7:40-53 |
| Sun 3/29 | Ezekiel 37:12-14; Romans 8:8-11; John 11:1-45 |

PARISH LOGISTICS

STAFF AVAILABILITY

As you may know, the Governor has put into place a "stay at home" directive for Ohio, effective today. From what I can tell, among the "essential businesses" which are still permitted to be in operation and to which employees are able to travel, are "religious entities". I am sure the Diocese will shortly issue some guidance regarding how this new "stay at home" order applies to parish staff and operations.

In the meantime, I am communicating to our staff today that I strongly urge our staff (and volunteers) to do as much of their service to the parish from home as possible. They should come on-site only if they absolutely feel they need to. And even in those instances, I am telling them to never hesitate to contact me if they would still rather stay at home for health concerns. Our staff's health and well-being are my top priority for them.

Accordingly, Deb and Kathy say they will be on site only for essential duties, and will work at home otherwise. Please refrain from physically visiting their offices. Contact Deb & Kathy through phone or e-mail. Please note, in Deb's case, for family health concerns, she would like to keep her Ada office (that front section) "sealed off" from others, so please do not enter that space.

If you happen to be out for essential business (shopping, pharmacy, etc), remember that each parish has a mail slot where you may drop off messages, offertory, other materials, etc. (Ada's office is the red house two doors from the church - 222 E. Highland Ave).

WHERE TO LEAVE VOICEMAIL MESSAGES

Also, of course, the typical "office hours" of either parish no longer apply. Regarding Kenton & voicemails: Since Kathy will not physically be at the Kenton office very much, and due to the difficulty of checking Kenton voicemails remotely, **PLEASE NOTE THAT THE BEST NUMBER TO USE TO CONTACT BOTH OFFICES OF THE CLUSTER, INCLUDING KENTON, IS TO CALL THE ADA OFFICE NUMBER (419-634-2626)**, since I (and Deb)

are much more able to retrieve voicemails remotely from that number.
WHEN CALLING THIS NUMBER, LEAVE A VOICEMAIL IF NO ONE ANSWERS, AND YOUR VOICEMAIL WILL AUTOMATICALLY TRIGGER OUR E-MAILS, TELLING US THAT SOMEONE CALLED. THANKS!

NO LAY HOMEBOUND VISITS

Reminder to those who typically bring Holy Communion to the homebound (including spouses, etc): We cannot permit homebound Communion until further notice, due to the social-distancing requirements of our Diocese, and the need to protect the vulnerable elderly population. If an elderly parishioner is in a life-threatening situation needing Viaticum or Anointing of the Sick, please contact a priest using either Emergency Line, and we will assess the situation. The Diocese is currently drafting guidelines on how priests should minister in such situations.

OFFERINGS

A question has come up about how to handle weekly Offertory donations. Obviously, we need to keep running our parishes (bills have to be paid, staff have to be paid, Jackie needs her tuna, etc.). I will leave it up to parishioners to decide either to A) mail in your donations/envelopes, and B) perhaps a more preferable option (to reduce possible contamination of mail with the virus en route) to keep track of your weekly amounts and to submit them as a "lump-sum" contribution when we are able to get back to "normal". I will give more advice as time goes on and as the virus situation progresses. Thanks for your understanding and flexibility, and ongoing support of our parish!