

# PASTOR'S UPDATE TO PARISHIONERS – H (3/30/20)

## WHAT'S IN THIS UPDATE:

- PASTORAL MESSAGE TO PARISHIONERS FROM FR. FERGUSON
- THOUGHTS FOR OUR PARISH CHILDREN BY "JACKIE", THE PASTOR'S CAT
- LIVE-STREAMED CLUSTER MASS – FOLLOW UP & PALM SUNDAY
- TRIDUUM LITURGIES
- CLUSTER SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES – NEW ITEMS
- CLUSTER SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES – RECAP OF EXISTING ITEMS
- PARISH LOGISTICS – RECAP (IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ!)

## PASTORAL MESSAGE TO PARISHIONERS FROM FR. FERGUSON

Greetings!

We begin our third week of a "new" way of living due to Coronavirus, which has changed almost every aspect of our lives! This is especially true, as we experienced once again yesterday, the way we worship and encounter Jesus in the Holy Eucharist. Participating in the Holy Mass via live-stream is a very unusual experience, not only for you all but also for me as a priest! Fortunately, God-willing, for us this will only be a *temporary* situation, and before long we should be able to come back to church and encounter Jesus' Real Presence physically once again, as seems most natural and right. Jesus, after all, is a Lord who desires to be encountered physically "in flesh and blood" as He so often made clear in His ministry. That's why, as Catholics, we are "sacramental" disciples who recognize the pride-of-place of the Holy Eucharist in our Christian walk.

But, you know, the present circumstances of "live-stream" Masses got me to thinking recently about something quite sobering: the need for more vocations to the priesthood. It was the will of Jesus (e.g., in John Chapter 6, at the Last Supper, on the Cross, at Emmaus, etc) that His Church would need the Eucharist as its heart and soul, and that the Eucharist would necessarily require His work through priests at the Church's altars. So, what would happen if we do not have sufficient numbers of priests in the Church? This, of course, hinders the ability of the Faithful to encounter Jesus most vividly through...the Eucharist. Now to be clear, I am not at all a "clericalist" who thinks that priests are "more special" than any other humans! I am keenly aware that all priests are sinners, too, who, for reasons known only to God, Jesus asks to offer their lives precisely for the service of their fellow disciples in this specific way: to be instruments, the imperfect "hands" through which Jesus chooses to remain active in this world, through His Sacrament of the Eucharist. But still, priests are needed for the ability of the Eucharist to be available to the People of God. So, again, what would the Church look like with not enough priests? What would happen if Mass could not be offered at so many local parishes in America as we currently are able to? Well, things may look similar to what they currently look like, for example, in many parts of Latin America, where most Catholics are only able to celebrate a Mass perhaps once every 3 or 6 months, depending on when the few available priests are able to travel to each town on circuits. Or....maybe things may look similar to what we have been experiencing these last two weeks: resorting to having to watch Mass on the internet, and therefore not being able to receive the living Lord Jesus physically in Holy Communion!

Quite a sobering thought! But with current trends even here in America, this situation may become a reality in the not-so-distant future unless, as the Catholic Faithful, we embrace the need wholeheartedly to promote vocations to the priesthood. As we speak, our own Diocese is undergoing a long-term planning process to address the reality that in only 15 years, with current data, we will already have far fewer priests to offer Mass in our 106 parishes than we currently do now. What will happen, including here in Hardin County? The time has come – and has already been here for a long time – for us to take action and rediscover the vital role of priests as an integral and vital part of the Body of Christ. We need especially to promote priestly vocations among our young men, our sons and grandsons, and encourage them to see the

priesthood and the opportunity to help Jesus do battle against Satan and bring souls to the Victory of Heaven, as a courageous, all-in, manly, total and committed way of living their lives for others, akin to the spirit of bring a brave Marine on the front lines fighting terrorists, or a doctor on the front lines fighting Coronavirus: a way of laying oneself down for the benefit of others in imitation of the Sacrifice made by Jesus Himself. Most boys aspire to a challenge. Challenge them to one day become priests! Just as it is true that every disciple of the Body of Christ is important, so too are priests. In this unusual time of having to watch Mass via livestream, with perhaps more time with our families, let's take advantage of this extra time and pray and take action on the need for vocations, and find ways to encourage priestly vocations within our own families – including your own sons, grandsons, nephews and godsons. God is calling brave young men to the harvest: maybe He is wanting to work through you to pass that calling along!

Today's "Update – H" (this is getting to sound like a series of Income Tax Form attachments!) is an extended one, meant to gather together into "one place", for your convenience, all the various resources and logistics that have appeared over the past two weeks, along with some new items, too, viz.:

- 1) Check out the **Bulletin attachment** from Dee Printing with some helpful items
- 2) **Holy Week Mass logistics** for our Cluster
- 3) Some **new spiritual opportunities**, including some tips for our **PSR families**

We will definitely have an update on Friday (if not sooner, if timely issues come up) with more weekend Mass logistics.

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! How have you been doing with being at home so much? I hope you've been able to find ways to spend some fun time with your parents and brothers and sisters! Have you been able to keep in touch with your friends from school? That can be a challenge, can't it, through the telephone or computer! I have to talk to some of my cat friends through the window of Father's house here....at least those are the cats who don't growl at me! You know, as you're trying to think of more fun things to do with your family at home, remember that this Wednesday is April 1, which is also called "April Fools' Day"! That's when some people play some friendly tricks on others! It's fun to kid around with our family and friends, isn't it? But you have to be careful not to get carried away. Last year, on April Fools' Day, I decided to put some of my dry cat food into Father's cereal box! As it turned out, curiously, he wasn't too amused! Oh well! What fun things do you want to do with your family this week? What do you think are some ways that Jesus, as a child, played around with his parents (St. Joseph & St.

Mary!) and his buddies in Nazareth? Why not pray to Jesus today and ask Him to help you to have a great, fun, and loving time with your family this week! Have a “purr”-fect week!

## **LIVE-STREAMED CLUSTER MASS – FOLLOW UP & PALM SUNDAY**

Thanks to all who viewed our second live-streamed Cluster Mass yesterday! Thanks again to Deacon Mike and Steve Johnson for assisting.

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.

Our next live-streamed Cluster Mass will be next Sunday, which is **Palm Sunday**, again at **9:00 a.m.** You may consider making use of the following site, especially for the Passion Reading, which will be part of the Palm Sunday Mass, to follow along: <https://catholicreadings.org/palm-sunday-lords-passion/>. We may also try to compile a Mass Worship Aid of some sort to be sent out with Friday’s update containing hymns as well.

Even with Coronavirus, we still had to honor our order for the palm branches (or lose 90% of the cost!), so we will still have palms shipped to our parishes! We will try to figure out some way to make them available (without actually having folks come inside the church buildings); those details will be communicated later this week when we remind you of the live-streaming logistics.

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

## **TRIDUUM LITURGIES**

Bishop Brennan just issued directives regarding the celebration of the Sacred Triduum (Holy Thursday through Easter Sunday of Holy Week) under the present circumstances based on guidance from the Vatican and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

For **GOOD FRIDAY** and **EASTER VIGIL (HOLY SATURDAY EVENING)**, Bishop Brennan is recommending that local parishes not try to attempt to hold these liturgies, but to encourage the Faithful to **watch these liturgies broadcast from our Cathedral in Columbus (St. Joseph’s) or from the Vatican in Rome**. He will shortly send us more information on how to tune into these liturgies for Good Friday and Easter Vigil.

For **HOLY THURSDAY** and **EASTER MORNING**, Bishop Brennan gives Pastors permission to celebrate these Masses locally (of course, still with the current restrictions against having a congregation present) and to live-stream these Masses, as we’ve been doing for our Cluster Sunday Masses.

**Accordingly, I plan to offer:**

**LIVESTREAM CLUSTER HOLY THURSDAY MASS at 7:00 PM (April 9)**

**LIVESTREAM CLUSTER EASTER MORNING MASS at 9:00 AM (April 12).**

Unfortunately, our RCIA Elect (Catechumens & Candidates) will not be able to be baptized or received into the Catholic faith at Easter Vigil; this will need to be postponed, and Bishop Brennan says he will give us further guidance, based on the timeline of the Coronavirus, on when these Initiation Sacraments might be re-scheduled. Please keep our RCIA Elect in your prayers!

## **CLUSTER SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES – NEW ITEMS**

**GOOGLEDOCS - PARISH LIST OF FAMILY RESOURCES & CHILD CATECHESIS**

We have locally begun to build a “**Googledocs**” page (not me, but much more tech-savvy parishioners!) with a list of online resources (most of them free!) that you can use within your families to go deeper in your faith – whether it be **personally, with your spouse, or with your children**. The list is a compilation of ideas from local parishioners as well as an extensive list from the Office of Evangelization at our Diocese. Please explore these resources to take advantage of your “stay-at-home” time and your new-found extra time with your children! Go to this link: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-4lXfMShtvf9udq-H3iDsM29gZmlzIKpHCwAeFFGQo/edit?usp=sharing>. This list will be regularly updated, so check back frequently for new ideas!

**Note regarding PSR catechesis + Confirmation prep:** I will be discussing with our local DRE’s in the next few days on ideas of how to handle “missed” PSR classes in each parish after things get “normal” again, as well as completing sacramental preparation for First Communion and Confirmation. In the meantime, feel free to make use of the catechetical ideas that may be sent to you by Deb or Stacey, or the ones listed in the Googledocs page above. Regarding Confirmation, Damascus Campus is also offering some alternative approaches for the Weekend Retreat that we had planned to send our youth to in mid-April, which in all likelihood probably will not be able to take place “on-site” as originally planned, since the Ohio “stay-at-home” order may quite likely extend beyond the date of the retreat (April 17-19). We are exploring those new options proposed by Damascus. More information to come!

**REMEMBER that DAMASCUS CAMPUS** has some new online alternatives for family devotions in light of Coronavirus, called “**Damascus Live**”. It includes for each day: Prayer Lab (Bible study): 10:30-11:00am; Worship & Intercession: 3:00-4:00pm; Night-Live (family faith session): 7:30-8:30pm. Starts today (Thursday, March 19): “Join us LIVE on Damascus Facebook and Instagram for an experience of Christ in your own home. Each live stream is open to anyone free of charge, and will stream Monday - Friday with content for all ages. All videos will be posted on our Facebook page after each segment is complete. Go to the Damascus Facebook page.” It is difficult to paste their entire promo e-mail here, so I suggest if you wish to join in, contact Sheila McMahan at [sheilamcmahon@damascuscampus.com](mailto:sheilamcmahon@damascuscampus.com) or call her at 740-480-1288.

## **ENTHRONEMENT OF YOUR HOME TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS**

Paula Boulanger wanted to pass along information about a growing movement of recent years, known as the “**Enthronement to the Sacred Heart of Jesus**” of one’s home or apartment. It is a great way to dedicate your home to the protection and care of our Lord, and I know that many throughout our Diocese have been doing this in recent times, and the current epidemic is an opportune time to consider doing the same for your own home. Paula has experience with helping folks with their home Enthronements, which can also be done on your own: “...in my heart of hearts I know this is extremely important especially now. I believe that God is giving us this time. He's calling us perhaps more than ever before to turn to Him in prayer. What a beautiful devotion our parishioners can take part in! It is now easier than it was [in past years] as a packet can be downloaded to do on their own [Enthronement] at home.” Paula shares the following link on how to do the Enthronement: <https://welcomehisheart.com/> She also shares this video for more information. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5LYJ\\_h0W5s&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5LYJ_h0W5s&feature=youtu.be) [youtube.com] For questions, contact Paula at [pmboulanger@gamil.com](mailto:pmboulanger@gamil.com).

## **ST. GABRIEL RADIO**

Not only did St. Gabriel radio broadcast our ‘Diocesan Day of Prayer & Penance’, but they have ongoing spiritual resources, as a great resource based here in our own Diocese. Click here [St. Gabriel Radio](#) to explore.

## CLUSTER SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES – RECAP OF EXISTING ITEMS

### SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION

As a reminder, Bishop Brennan, a few days ago, communicated some advice from the U.S. Bishops (and the Vatican) on how to handle the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which he would like us to follow, in light of the need for social-distancing and not having the public come into our church buildings. Attached is a document which gives the particulars. Basically it offers the following points:

- We cannot offer one-on-one Confession for the time being
- But you can make use of the existing provision of canon law that, in time of necessity when Confession is not available, you may make a “perfect contrition” with the resolve to go to Confession at the next available opportunity (in our case, after the pandemic restrictions are lifted)
- You can also avail yourself of the many “plenary indulgences” opportunities available, which also remit sin, which also include the intention to go to Confession at the next available opportunity. In fact, Pope Francis has added indulgences for those who are suffering from Coronavirus as well as those who care for them.

Please read the DOCUMENT related to this on the parish websites or attached earlier to “Update – E” for more details.

### 3:00 DAILY TECH-BASED CLUSTER DEVOTIONS SCHEDULE

The following is the schedule for our tech-based Cluster Devotions group:

Monday - Divine Mercy Chaplet @ 3:00

Tuesday - Divine Mercy Chaplet @ 3:00

Wednesday - Rosary @ 3:00

Thursday - Divine Mercy Chaplet @ 3:00

Friday - Divine Mercy Chaplet @ 3:00

PLUS Stations of the Cross @ 6:00 – For the ‘Stations Resource’ PDF that we follow, see the Kenton Website (link is on the homepage) or the Ada Website (link is within Update B)

Again to sign up for the conference call number/site, email Steve Johnson at [sjohnsonpv@gmail.com](mailto:sjohnsonpv@gmail.com).

### SUNDAY MASS

Besides our weekly Cluster Livestream Mass, there are also other tech options for remote Sunday Mass viewing:

St. Gabriel Radio (AM 820 in Central Ohio, FM 88.3 in Southern Ohio and [www.stgabrielradio.com](http://www.stgabrielradio.com) on the web) broadcasts Mass from St. Joseph’s Cathedral (AM Radio) and St. Mary’s in Portsmouth (FM Radio) on Sunday mornings at 10:30 AM. Sunday Masses are also viewable on both WWHO-TV Columbus and WHIZ-TV Zanesville in addition to other cable stations.

### WEEKDAY MASS

- Bishop Brennan will celebrate daily Mass from the Cathedral which will be broadcast on St. Gabriel Radio at 12:05 p.m.
- Notre Dame livestreams daily Mass at 11:30 AM throughout the week. Here’s a link to their webpage: [https://www.google.com/url?q=https://campusministry.nd.edu/mass-worship/basilica-of-the-sacred-heart/watch-mass/&source=gmail&ust=1584562136723000&usg=AFQjCNH2BSbXwE24bundbEK\\_QsbvXjGocQ](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://campusministry.nd.edu/mass-worship/basilica-of-the-sacred-heart/watch-mass/&source=gmail&ust=1584562136723000&usg=AFQjCNH2BSbXwE24bundbEK_QsbvXjGocQ)

### FORMED

Remember that we have the FORMED online resource for Catholic study and prayer opportunities:

1. Go to [www.formed.org](http://www.formed.org) or click here: [FORMED](#)
2. Click on “Sign Up”
3. Click on “I belong to a Parish or Organization”

4. 'Create New Account'
5. Under 'Find your Parish', search for "Immaculate Conception Church 222 East North Street Kenton"  
(Note: this is good for Our Lady of Lourdes, too; FORMED put our cluster subscription under Kenton's name)
6. Enter your email address and create a password
7. You should be ready to enter and use the site. The first time or two, you may need to enter a verification code that FORMED sends to your e-mail account.
8. Thereafter, from the device you set up the account on, simply go to [www.formed.org](http://www.formed.org) and all you have to do is click on 'sign in' and click 'start watching'; the password does not need to be entered every time.
9. NOTE: the initial set-up procedure would need to be done on each separate device you use before using FORMED on that device, but, of course, you can use the same e-mail and password.

## CLUSTER ON-LINE 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](mailto: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

Mon 3/30	Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62; John 8:1-11
Tues 3/31	Numbers 21:4-9; John 8:21-30
Wed 4/1	Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; John 8:31-42
Thurs 4/2	Genesis 17:3-9; John 8:51-59
Fri 4/3	Jeremiah 20:10-13; John 10:31-42
Sat 4/4	Ezekiel 37:21-28; John 11:45-56
Sun 4/5	[Palm Sunday] Matthew 21:1-11 [Processional Gospel]; Isaiah 50:4-7; Philippians 2:6-11; Matthew 26:14 – 27:66

## PARISH LOGISTICS - RECAP

### STAFF AVAILABILITY

As you may know, the Governor has put into place a "stay at home" directive for Ohio. Among the "essential businesses" which are still permitted to be in operation and to which employees are able to travel, are "religious entities".

However, following Diocesan guidance, I have communicated 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.

## 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 has drafted 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”. (Currently, we do not have capabilities of processing EFT transactions, which takes some time and effort to get up and running for an entire parish.) 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!