

PASTOR'S UPDATE TO PARISHIONERS – I (4/3/20)

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PASTORAL MESSAGE TO PARISHIONERS FROM FR. FERGUSON

Greetings!

We continue to live a strange existence, and it looks like from the Governor's extended "Stay-at-home" order from yesterday, that we will be living this way for quite a while longer! It's definitely a time of sacrifice, but I think it's helpful that it coincides with our Season of Lent, when we can unite our inconveniences and sufferings to Jesus for the benefit of our sanctification, purification, and holiness as we give everything to Him. With so many spending much more time at home, I encourage everyone also to use this time not so much for idle time on the computer, but to re-focus on the relationships that matter most in our lives: silent time with God, and quality time with our families.

Let's also ask Jesus' grace upon those who have been especially struggling with the epidemic, especially those who are sick, the dying, those who care for them, as well as the newly-unemployed. These times have been unsettling for many of us, so that's why I found it helpful that Bishop Brennan forwarded the following prayer to the priests yesterday. Allow me to share it with you:

"Let us continue to pray for one another during these times, and let us pray a prayer composed by Saint Francis de Sales, the patron saint of our Columbus Diocese:

*Do not look forward in fear to the changes and chances of this life;
Rather, look to them with full confidence that, as they arise,
God, to whom you belong will in His love enable you to profit by them.
He has guided you thus far in life, and He will lead you safely through all trials;
and when you cannot stand it, God will bury you in His arms.*

*Do not fear what may happen tomorrow;
the same everlasting Father who cares for you today
will take care of you then and every day.
He will either shield you from suffering,
or will give you unfailing strength to bear it.*

Be at peace, then, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations. Amen.

Fraternally, Bishop Brennan"

Today's "UPDATE – I" is meant primarily to prepare us for Palm Sunday weekend and the rest of the liturgies of Holy Week, the most sacred week of the year. On Monday, I will send out another Update which will re-cap all of our ongoing spiritual opportunities. It will also include some items for our parish children, including a coloring book for Good Friday, as well as Jackie the Cat's "Thoughts" for our kids (since she typically sleeps all weekend!)

Please make special note of these items below:

- The Ohio Bishops have had to extend the period of suspension of public Masses three more weekends beyond Easter (the end of the current suspension period), through May 3rd.
- The Palm Sunday Cluster livestream Mass information is given below (there is a Worship Aid and spiritual bulletin from Dee Printing attached).
- Our Cluster will Livestream Holy Thursday and Easter Morning; see below.
- Our Diocese will offer a Virtual Lenten Mission; see the section below about the Cathedral for more information.
- See below about an idea of how to help our fellow parishioners.

Hang in there and we will pull through, as we support each other as disciples in the Lord Jesus!

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

- Fr. Bill Ferguson, Pastor

NEW STATEMENT OF THE OHIO BISHOPS – MASS SUSPENSION EXTENDED

As you no doubt are aware, the Governor has extended the “Stay-at-Home” order through May 1. Accordingly, the Ohio Bishops yesterday (Thursday) agreed to extend the suspension of public Masses for three more weekends beyond Easter (the end of the original suspension period). Accordingly, **we will not be able to celebrate public on-site Masses for the weekends of April 19, April 26, and May 3.** We will, of course, aim to continue our Livestream Masses during this extended period.

Also, of course, this means that other group activities of the parish (PSR, RCIA, meetings, etc) that would have taken place during this time will be cancelled and/or postponed. Please read the attached statement of the Ohio Bishops, who offer some helpful spiritual encouragement.

Discussions are underway whereby we should be able to livestream an hour-long period of Adoration and prayer on Divine Mercy Sunday (April 19), likely in the afternoon. More information to come.

LIVE-STREAMED CLUSTER MASS – PALM SUNDAY

Our next live-streamed Cluster Mass will be this Sunday, which is **Palm Sunday**, again at **9:00 a.m.** The link for our YouTube channel is: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVxcsTyz-ukNpEDHVkQWKVw>

To assist with participating in the Mass, we have created a **Worship Aid with all the readings and hymns**, which is attached.

PALMS: Even with Coronavirus, we still had to honor our order for the palm branches (or lose 90% of the cost!), so we still had palms shipped to our parishes. We will place these palms outside for parishioners to pick up at your convenience beginning Saturday afternoon, if you happen to be out on an essential run to the store, pharmacy, etc. Please honor the “Stay-at-Home” order by not making a “special trip” to pick up a palm. The palms will remain available until Holy Thursday. At Ada, the palms will be in a container near the front door of the church; At Kenton, the palms will be in a container on the porch of the office building. For sake of sanitation, please only pull a palm out by the tip of the frond; do not handle the other palms.

TRIDUUM LITURGIES - CLUSTER

Bishop Brennan has 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**. In the next section below is the schedule of these liturgies from St. Joseph Cathedral.

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).

To access these Masses, please use the same YouTube link you have already been using for the Sunday Masses.

THIS WEEK'S MASS READINGS

Sat 4/4	Ezekiel 37:21-28; John 11:45-56
Sun 4/5	(Palm Sunday) Matthew 21:1-11; Isaiah 50:4-7; Philippians 2:6-11; Matthew 26:14 – 27:66
Mon 4/6	Isaiah 42:1-7; John 12:1-11
Tues 4/7	Isaiah 49:1-6; John 13:21-33, 36-38
Wed 4/8	Isaiah 50:4-9a; Matthew 26:14-25
Thurs 4/9	(Holy Thursday) Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15
Fri 4/10	(Good Friday) Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12; Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9; John 18:1 – 19:42
Sat 4/11	(Easter Vigil) Genesis 1:1 – 2:2; Genesis 22:1-18; Exodus 14:15 – 15:1; Isaiah 54:5-14; Isaiah 55:1-11; Baruch 3:9-15, 32-4:4; Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28; Romans 6:3-11; Matthew 28:1-10
Sun 4/12	(Easter Morning) Acts 10:34a, 37-43; Colossians 3:1-4; John 20:1-9

TRIDUUM LITURGIES & MISSION TALKS - CATHEDRAL

Bishop Brennan passed along the following information about Holy Week and Triduum liturgies from St. Joseph Cathedral in Columbus, as well as a Virtual Lenten Mission available for all to take part in:

EARLY HOLY WEEK MASSES & EVENTS from St. Joseph Cathedral

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord -- 10:30 a.m.

- Broadcast on St. Gabriel Radio, 820 AM, Columbus, and 88.3 FM, Portsmouth
- Live-stream at www.columbuscatholic.org, Diocesan Facebook page (www.facebook.com/ColumbusDiocese), and Diocesan YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwngWQ-UQuP9jfoWlufyINQ>)
- **Broadcast in SPANISH:**
 - La Mega 103.1 FM, Columbus – 10:00 a.m.
 - Audio archive available on St. Gabriel Website (<https://stgabrielradio.com/programs/audio-archive-2/spanish-mass/>)
 - Video available on Diocesan YouTube Channel

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Holy Week

- **Daily Mass -- 12:05 p.m.**
 - Broadcast on St. Gabriel Radio, 820 AM, Columbus, and 88.3 FM, Portsmouth
 - Live-stream at www.columbuscatholic.org, Diocesan Facebook page, and Diocesan YouTube Channel
- **Diocesan-wide Lenten Retreat from St. Joseph Cathedral**
Leader: Father Michael Kelly, Director of Spiritual Formation, Pontifical College Josephinum
 - *Monday, April 6 – Our Response to This Particular Holy Week*
 - *Tuesday, April 7 -- The Evil that Challenged the Last Supper*
 - *Wednesday, April 8 -- The Blessed Virgin Mary Guiding Us Through Holy Week*
 - Broadcasts each day at 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on St. Gabriel Radio, 820 AM, Columbus, and 88.3 FM, Portsmouth
 - Live-stream at www.columbuscatholic.org, Diocesan Facebook page, and Diocesan YouTube Channel

Thursday of Holy Week

The Chrism Mass -- 9:00 a.m.

- Broadcast on St. Gabriel Radio, 820 AM, Columbus, and 88.3 FM, Portsmouth
- Live-stream at www.columbuscatholic.org, Diocesan Facebook page, and Diocesan YouTube Channel

THE SACRED PASCHAL TRIDUUM

- **Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper – 6:30 p.m.**
 - Broadcast on St. Gabriel Radio, 820 AM, Columbus, and 88.3 FM, Portsmouth
 - Live-stream at www.columbuscatholic.org, Diocesan Facebook page, and Diocesan YouTube Channel
- **Good Friday -- The Celebration of the Passion of the Lord – 12 Noon**
 - Broadcast on St. Gabriel Radio, 820 AM, Columbus, and 88.3 FM, Portsmouth
 - Live-stream at www.columbuscatholic.org, Diocesan Facebook page, and Diocesan YouTube Channel
- **Good Friday -- Stations of the Cross – 7:00 p.m.**
 - Broadcast on St. Gabriel Radio, 820 AM, Columbus, and 88.3 FM, Portsmouth
- **Holy Saturday -- The Easter Vigil in the Holy Night – 8:00 p.m.**
 - Broadcast on St. Gabriel Radio, 820 AM, Columbus, and 88.3 FM, Portsmouth
 - Live-stream at www.columbuscatholic.org, Diocesan Facebook page, and Diocesan YouTube Channel
- **Easter Sunday Mass -- 10:30 a.m.**
 - Broadcast Live on NBC4 TV, Columbus
 - Broadcast on St. Gabriel Radio, 820 AM, Columbus, and 88.3 FM, Portsmouth
 - Live-stream at www.columbuscatholic.org, Diocesan Facebook page, and Diocesan YouTube Channel
- **Broadcast in SPANISH:**
 - La Mega 103.1 FM, Columbus – 10:00 a.m.
 - Audio archive available on St. Gabriel Website (<https://stgabrielradio.com/programs/audio-archive-2/spanish-mass/>)
 - Video available on Diocesan YouTube Channel

HELPING OUR FELLOW PARISHIONERS

We have had a parishioner offer to help “if there are any seniors or immune-compromised parishioners that might need assistance with vital errands/ prescription/food runs”. With the extension of the Governor’s “Stay-at-Home” order, this situation and need may become more common in the coming weeks. Although it seems like most of our elderly parishioners are being looked after pretty well by friends and family, from my discussions with staff and others (and I’ve

been doing an ongoing rotation of calls to our homebound parishioners as well), please know of this offer of help. This could also be applied to those who may not necessarily be elderly, but who have health issues and may not feel comfortable being in a public place.

Anyone who could benefit from this offer of help may call the Ada office number (419-634-2626) and leave a message (if no one answers). **ALSO**, it would be good if a few other parishioners from our cluster would let us know if you would be **willing to assist with these essential errands**. In this way, we can connect a parishioner in need with a parishioner volunteer. If interested in being on an errand volunteer list, please e-mail me (hamilton.college@outlook.com) or Deb Driscoll (oll@woil.com). Thank for your support of our fellow parishioners!

Emergency Grants available: For parishioners experiencing serious financial hardships due to the Coronavirus epidemic, please be aware that the Catholic Foundation associated with our Diocese has recently launched an Emergency Grant program to offer help for these situations. If you think you may benefit, please contact me, Fr. Ferguson, directly using my e-mail above.