

PASTOR'S UPDATE TO PARISHIONERS – J (4/6/20)

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PASTORAL MESSAGE TO PARISHIONERS FROM FR. FERGUSON

Greetings!

As we enter the fourth week of our strange existence due to COVID-19, we as a nation are entering a phase of this epidemic which involves mixed emotions, as highlighted yesterday at the President's Coronavirus Task Force Briefing. The Task Force says that, at least in some parts of the country, we may be finally hitting the "flattening of the curve", which means two things: the first is that many areas are therefore seeing the highest death tolls to date; that's what happens when one is at the "top" of the "curve". Indeed, they are warning us that the "darkest" phase of the epidemic is upon us, bringing with it immense pain and grief for many families across the country, a tragic phase that may likely remain for the next week or two. But the second thing that being at the "top" of the "curve" means, as Dr. Fauci said, is that things should soon improve, as before long we come down the "other side". In other words, there is hope of relief and a restored way of life after this current period of darkness, sickness, and death.

To us Catholics, this dynamic of "life after death" sounds familiar, especially as we begin Holy Week together. It's what the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus are all about. As disciples of Jesus, we never despair in the face of darkness, sin, and even death. We always maintain hope that there is the "other side" of the "curve", or the battle, with evil and Satan and death. We know there is, because Jesus has been there before us to forge the way. And we can maintain hope in the darkness and struggles of our lives in this world because Jesus promised He will walk with us through our Crosses – our "curve" – to safely get us to our destination of eternal life, Heaven, healing, true happiness: in other words, salvation (which comes from the Latin word precisely for "health" (salvus): the eternal health of the Person: soul and body.)

Let's continue to support each other as fellow disciples in this period of national "darkness" this Holy Week, with our faith in the Paschal Mystery of the Death and Resurrection – the Victory – of Jesus! He is here to help carry our crosses toward new life, personally and as a great nation!

(In my opinion, the epidemic will need to wrap up anyway before we get to Update – Z; and at the rate I'm going, that won't be too long into the future!)

Today's "UPDATE – J" is meant primarily to prepare us for rest of Holy Week, and to "re-cap" into one place **all the various Spiritual/Catechetical Opportunities** we've shared the last couple of weeks. Most of the items today have appeared before, but please make note of the following important or new items:

Please be reminded of these **essential points**, which we introduced last Update:

- 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.

- Parish activities, groups, and meetings until May 3rd will also need to be cancelled or postponed.
- Our Cluster will Livestream Holy Thursday and Easter Morning Masses; see below.

Please take note of these few **NEW points** below in today's Update:

- 1) Jackie the Cat has some new Monday weekly "Thoughts" for our children.
- 2) I've attached a Good Friday/Stations coloring book for our children.
- 3) Note a 'Revised Holy Week Schedule' for the 3:00 Tech-based Devotional Group (below).
- 4) I added a note about "old Palms" in the paragraph below about "Palms".

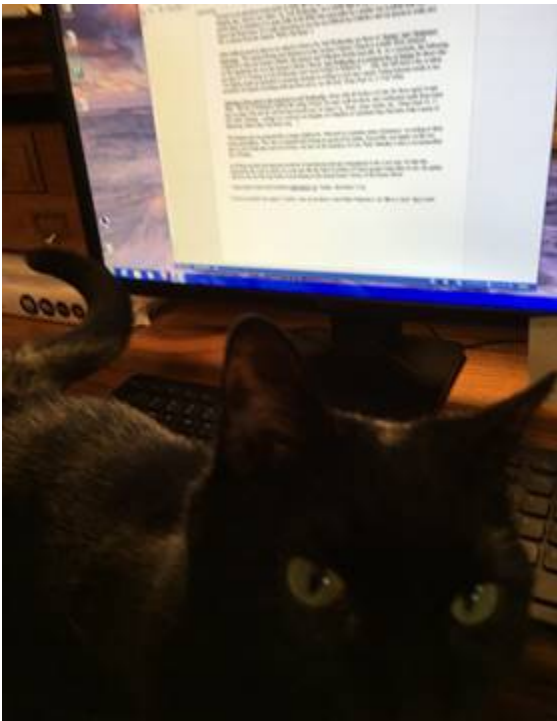
Additionally:

- We will definitely have another Update this week (probably on Wednesday) to pass along Worship Aids for our Livestreamed Cluster Holy Thursday Mass and Easter Morning Mass.
- I will be sending out (hopefully tonight) a notice to our Confirmation families regarding an alternative (virtual, on-line) experience of the Confirmation Retreat put on by the Damascus Campus.

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! This week is a really special one! It is called "Holy Week"! It's a time when we remember and re-live the most important moments of Jesus life. Those were the days when He entered the Holy City of Jerusalem with lots of palms (Palm Sunday), and then He had the Last Supper when He started the Sacrament of the Eucharist (Holy Thursday), and then He was arrested and crucified on the Cross and died for us (Good Friday), and finally He rose from the dead (Easter Sunday)! All tis really happened – it's not a fairy tale at all! Jesus did all this 2000 years ago, and we still make a pretty big deal out of it. That's because Jesus did these things because He really loves us! He wanted to battle against sin and death for us, so that we could one day live forever with God in Heaven.

That's pretty amazing! We would not be able to get to Heaven if Jesus had not died for us and rose from the dead. Can you imagine what Heaven is like? It's pretty hard to do, because Heaven is where we are totally close to God, and God is so much more love and happiness than we can possibly imagine! Heaven is more special than even a million, million, million tuna treats! Heaven is more full of love than even if you had a billion moms and dads giving you hugs and kisses! This week, ask your Mom or Dad to read with you from the Bible all about what Jesus did during Holy Week. What's your favorite part of what Jesus did? What do you think Heaven is like? Why not pray to Jesus today and thank Him for all his love for you and all He did for you! Have a "purr"-fect week!

LIVE-STREAMED CLUSTER MASS – FOLLOW UP & PALMS

Thanks to all who viewed and participated in our third live-streamed Cluster Mass yesterday!

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

PALMS: Reminder: we have placed palms outside for parishioners to pick up at your convenience, 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 the end of 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. NOTE ALSO: there is a separate container next to the new palms into which you may deposit your old palms, which we can burn into ashes for next year's Ash Wednesday use.

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:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVxcsTyz-ukNpEDHVkQWKVw>

To assist with participating in the Mass, we will create a **Worship Aid for each Mass with all the readings and hymns.** These Aids will most likely be sent out in Wednesday's Update.

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.

THIS WEEK'S MASS READINGS

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

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

CLUSTER SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITIES – RECAP OF EXISTING ITEMS

3:00 DAILY TECH-BASED CLUSTER DEVOTIONS SCHEDULE

[REVISED HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE]

The following is the Revised Holy Week Schedule for our tech-based Cluster Devotions group:

Monday - Divine Mercy Chaplet

Tuesday - Rosary (Sorrowful Mysteries)

Wednesday - Divine Mercy Chaplet

Holy Thursday - Divine Mercy Chaplet

Good Friday – Stations of the Cross

Note for Friday: These Stations will be at the 3:00 time; nothing at 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.

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.

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.

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 McMahon at 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 [youtube.com] For questions, contact Paula at pmboulanger@gamil.com.

ST. GABRIEL RADIO

St. Gabriel radio broadcast has ongoing spiritual resources, as a great resource based here in our own Diocese. Click here [St. Gabriel Radio](#) to explore.

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 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

FORMED

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

1. Go to www.formed.org or click here: [FORMED](http://www.formed.org)
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 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. 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."

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!