

PASTOR'S UPDATE TO PARISHIONERS – N (4/17/20)

WHAT'S IN THIS UPDATE:

- PASTORAL MESSAGE TO PARISHIONERS FROM FR. FERGUSON
- DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY
- KENTON ITEM: MAINTENANCE UPDATE
- KENTON ITEM: T-SHIRT FUNDRAISING SALE
- BOTH PARISHES: CONFIRMATION RETREAT

PASTORAL MESSAGE TO PARISHIONERS FROM FR. FERGUSON

Today's "UPDATE – N" offers some new items. Please read them carefully. Also, keep making use of the **various Spiritual/Catechetical Opportunities** we've shared the last couple of weeks (see Update J).

Bishop Brennan yesterday sent priests a couple of items to share with you for the weekend –

- 1) His **special message** to the Faithful for Divine Mercy Sunday; very encouraging.
- 2) A reminder on how to **receive forgiveness for sins**, especially in light of the inability to do Sacramental Confession; this is especially useful given that Divine Mercy Sunday brings with it a Plenary Indulgence, which normally would require Confession.

Please click on the attachments to read them: [Special Message from Bishop](#) [Forgiveness of Sins - Bishop](#)

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

- Fr. Bill Ferguson, Pastor

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

This Sunday is the Second Sunday of the Easter Season, also known (since 2000, at the permanent direction of St. John Paul II) as "**Divine Mercy Sunday**". This is when we focus especially on Jesus' loving mercy for us, as revealed in some miraculous appearances to St. Faustina Kowalska, a nun in Poland in the 1930's.

Sunday Mass, as with past weekends, will be livestreamed, still at 9:00 a.m. A **Worship Aid** for Mass is [here](#).

ALSO, it is customary for many parishes on this particular Sunday to offer special devotions in honor of Jesus as "Divine Mercy". Accordingly, this Sunday, we will offer an additional **livestreamed "Divine Mercy Holy Hour"** at the "hour of mercy", i.e., **from 3:00 to 4:00 pm**. A separate **Worship Aid** for this Holy Hour is [here](#).

Feel free to "tune in" for this special "Divine Mercy Holy Hour". It will be in the context of Eucharistic Exposition, and will involve hymns, prayers, a brief Gospel, and, of course, the recitation of the "Divine Mercy Chaplet", along with the Litany of Divine Mercy. We will also have a substantial period of silent time for silent adoration as we spend time with Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament.....which assists us in going back out to live and witness the Gospel and serves others in the challenges of the current times.

To access these occasions this Sunday, please use the same YouTube link you have already been using for the Sunday Masses: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVxcsTyz-ukNpEDHVkQWKVw>

To offer more information about Divine Mercy Sunday and the Divine Mercy Chaplet, we may have **some catechetical materials** compiled for you in the next day or so; if so, we will post them on the two parish websites; check there over the weekend.

A **bulletin for this weekend** from Dee Printing is attached [here](#).

KENTON ITEM: MAINTENANCE UPDATE

I want to give ICC parishioners **an update** on an important priority for the Immaculate Conception parish – our maintenance needs – and to **suggest some ways to help**, to begin thinking about as we hopefully wind down the Coronavirus in the next couple of weeks.

Overview, Update, and Current Status:

In the days and weeks immediately before Coronavirus took over daily life, I had been actively meeting with a number of groups and individuals (Finance Council, Parish Council, Knights of Columbus, Deacon Mike, our maintenance team, etc) to try to get a **well-coordinated handle on the long-overdue major maintenance needs of our physical plant**. As you know, despite some good efforts by many folks, there is still a lot of delayed maintenance at our parish that has been accumulating for years. When I first came to the parish in July 2018, I immediately had to tackle the urgent situation of the St. Anthony Center roof; thanks to our Diocesan Facilities Office staff, our local maintenance team, and two generous grants from the Catholic Foundation and over a year's time and effort, we seem to have stabilized the roof and stopped further damage to the interior gym.

But that's just the beginning of what needs to be addressed. I know we have, for example, the ever-persistent **"floor drain"** problem in the St. Anthony Center utility room that has affected a number of groups and activities. Rob Schorr from the Diocesan Facilities Office has been on-site numerous times to look at it and to try some remedies. A first attempt a few weeks ago to snake the drain, see where it goes, and unclog it, seemed to offer some relief. But it wasn't enough. On the cusp of Coronavirus, Rob was about to get another contractor in with heavier-duty equipment to deal with the clog down the drain. Of course, with restrictions now on non-essential work and travel, that drama will need to resume after the all-clear is given. (The Diocese has halted maintenance projects throughout all the parishes of our Diocese).

Rob had also inspected the **main church building**, just before Coronavirus, to look at why we're still getting water damage to the **interior plaster** in certain locations. The outside spot-tuckpointing repairs done by Todd McNutt in the fall of 2018 seem to be holding up, and Todd had also worked on many of the downspouts to facilitate drainage from the gutters. But the plaster damage continues. A company that Rob has good faith in was able to come on site just before Coronavirus hit, to look things over: in their opinion, the plaster damage is a result of ongoing condensation issues in the church, and I am told by folks on Finance Council and others who have been at ICC obviously longer than I have, that the plaster in those areas (some of which had been covered by old radiators that were removed at the renovations) has always been a problem. It may be an issue that has to be addressed indefinitely with periodic plaster repairs; we have also discussed looking at air flow/AC issues in the church as a way to mitigate future recurrences.

The same company that Rob called in, also did a thorough survey of the **entire church building**, and identified a number of maintenance issues which will need to be addressed in the future. Admittedly, some are less urgent issues that can be held off for a while, but the issues relate to everything from tuckpointing repairs on many other parts of the church, to gutter/downspout issues, to issues of the louvers in the tower. Regarding the tuckpointing, it appears that the work done by the contractor during the 2012-13 renovations was shoddy; the company is now out of business (no wonder, based on what we discovered), and we are discussing with the Diocese on whether there is any way of recouping some of the cost of that work through the defunct contractor's bonding agency. But regarding the eventual repairs needed on the church, **I will continue to work with our Finance Council and our maintenance team and the Diocese** to see what we want to **prioritize over the coming years**. At least now we have a **good handle** on what the repair needs of the church are, so that we can avoid letting problems fester further into the future, causing more damage and cost. Many thanks to Jerry Droll for coordinating with Rob Schorr and the company to get this assessment moved along.

But that's just the church. There are a lot of other repairs (fortunately less drastic) needed to our other parish buildings. Another member of our maintenance team, Jane Scharf, got out her camera and note pad recently and did a thorough survey, inside and out, of all our other parish buildings to see what repairs and tasks are needed. She produced a whole booklet of well-labeled photos and descriptions. These include everything from spot painting and caulking, to wood refinishing in areas, to minor soffit and concrete repairs, to painting the fire escapes, to fixing the signage, to fixing doors and windows everywhere, etc. We also need to put some thought into updating the Center's restrooms, to updating the PSR classrooms and hallway, to doing the interior repairs to the upper gym (the water-damaged ceiling and wood floor, the stage, and repainting). This all would help serve our many ministries, and would make a much better impression upon the general public who visit our Center, and upon our youth who study in the classrooms. The gym could also be used for Festival and Youth Group activities. Thanks to Jane for doing this extensive tallying of all these more minor parish repairs. This helps us, again, to get a handle on where we stand, what we prioritize, and what needs to be done.

Ways to help after Coronavirus subsides

While some of the major repairs (at the church, for example) would obviously need to be handled by outside contactors (with the Diocese's help), a lot of the repairs just described and tallied by Jane could be done by parishioner volunteer help, or other possibilities to keep costs down. The Knights of Columbus has expressed some interest to help, and Parish Council floated the idea of inviting the local vocational school to use our site as a location for their students to apply their learning, such as up in the gym (they could spend a whole semester up there!). **But we also want to get all the rest of our parishioners to begin thinking of how you may be able to help out with time and labor.** For example, if you have skills in painting, or refinishing, or caulking, or laying carpet, or just want to help clean out clutter and tidy up certain areas, we eagerly invite your interest. I get a sense that our parishioners take great pride in our parish, and I want to facilitate parishioners to express that pride in helping out with some of the practical upkeep of our property. This is also a way of demonstrating to the community, in a spirit of evangelization, that we have something pretty special going on here at 222 East North Street. It's a great way of exercising stewardship and offering sacrifice to the Lord.

So.....**if you feel led to help lend your skills, time, and labor to the cause**, please let me or Deacon Mike or Kathy or any of our maintenance team (Jerry Droll and Jane Scharf) know. Please be aware that **it may take a few weeks** for us to get the "next steps" of this process going, since we don't know yet when Coronavirus will be over, and we also have a lot of postponed parish activities that will need to be rescheduled in May and June. But I wanted to take a moment now, while we are in "limbo", **to at least get folks thinking** about the opportunities and possibilities on the horizon, as I try to proactively address the many needs of our parish. Thanks for your support and patience.

KENTON ITEM: T-SHIRT FUNDRAISING SALE

In my last Update, I alluded to a T-Shirt Fundraising Sale related to the Ada parish. It was a parishioner-generated initiative and an idea that was presented to me that came up from the grass-roots level within Ada, to benefit 50:50 the Ada parish and three agencies which are involved with serving the Ada poor.

But to be completely fair to Kenton, and in anticipation of similar interest at ICC, it has been decided to offer a completely parallel T-Shirt Fundraising Sale to the Kenton parish as well. The Kenton sale will, analogously, benefit 50:50 the Kenton parish as well as the agencies which serve the poor of Kenton: St. Vincent de Paul, and LOVE, Inc. The Kenton T-shirt designing is underway as we speak. Hopefully by next week, we will have an order flyer ready for distributing. Again, please be patient with me.

OLL T-shirt info - [here](#)

BOTH PARISHES: CONFIRMATION RETREAT

Please pray today and tomorrow for our **11 Cluster Confirmation students**. **Tomorrow**, Saturday, they will be taking part in their **Confirmation Retreat** hosted by the folks at the Damascus Catholic Youth Mission Campus near Mt. Vernon. Unfortunately, their original plan to spend the entire weekend there on-site had to be changed, due to Coronavirus, to a one-day **“Virtual Retreat”**. From their individual homes, our students will interact with the other retreatants and with the exciting and powerful activities and topics put on by the Catholic youth missionaries of Damascus, including small-group discussions, prayer time together, and other ways to go deeper in their relationship with the Lord and in their enthusiasm for our Catholic faith. Damascus’ mission is to enliven a new generation of committed Catholics to encounter Jesus in a powerful way through His love and truth and through the sacraments and prayer life of the Church He founded. They also want our youth to embrace a bold and courageous pursuit of holiness in this world, as they witness to others of their generation and become a positive force in the world as they continue to grow up. Having seen a lot of changed lives and hearts through my own service at Damascus/Summer Youth Camp over the past 16 years, I am really excited that our 11 students from Kenton and Ada will have this opportunity. They are awesome youth, and they need our prayers of support and spiritual protection as they open their hearts up to Jesus tomorrow at a critical point in their life. Today and tomorrow, please pray, fast, and offer sacrifice for their intention! (Note: in case you are wondering, as of right now, the Diocese says that our June 2 Confirmation date is still a “go”.)

