

Things I've Seen and Heard

Musings of Fr. Bryan T. Reif

On behalf of the entire Pastoral Staff at both parishes of the Region, I wish to extend to you a very Happy Easter. Easter is different this year, with the “Stay at Home Order” in effect, we are not able to spend the time with our families and friends that perhaps we are accustomed to doing on Easter. We are not able to come to Church to celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord as we are accustomed to doing. This year is very different because of the precautions we are being asked to take due to the COVID-19 Coronavirus. This truly is a sacrifice for many. Being unable to gather to celebrate the Sacrifice of the Mass publicly, and being unable to receive the Most Holy Eucharist is a huge cross for many. Many people have expressed to me their hunger for the Eucharist, their desire to attend Mass again. This is good. This “fast” that we have forced on by the virus should make us hunger for the Mass, and the Eucharist, and to come to a deeper appreciation for what the Lord has given to us, His Church. As Christ’s Church, we are obliged to follow the Church’s law, the liturgical rubrics and norms, and the decrees of legitimate ecclesiastical authority: the pope, the bishops, the pastors of the Church. This “fast” we have been forced on should also help us to grow in our understanding and even appreciation that we receive the Faith as gift, God’s way, and His Church’s way, not necessarily our way. This I know has been a difficult time for many, if not most of us. We haven’t had Mass available to us, or Holy Communion, which we had become accustomed to having at our convenience. It is good that we break from that, and recognize that the Faith calls us to something more. We are called to sacrifice, and to sacrificial love. We are called to seek the Lord, not just wait upon Him. We are called to do what it takes to place God first in our lives, and not expect the Lord to fit in and around everything else we do and are about. Perhaps these are some of the lessons that we can learn from our “fast” this year caused by the global pandemic.

Pray! Pray! Pray! We still have until at least May 10th before our first publicly celebrated Sunday Mass. This time we are unable to come to Mass and receive Communion is still a time for prayer. The call to holiness is not cancelled. The call to live a life of prayer is not cancelled. We must do all we can to strive to be holy, and to grow in our life of prayer during this time. It can make the celebration of the Mass and Holy Communion that much “sweeter” for us when the time finally comes, and the pandemic is over.

Please continue to financially support the parishes as well. Because of the pandemic, and the suspension of Masses, our weekly collections in both parishes are way down. Our bills though, still need to be paid, and so do the salaries of our staff. Please consider mailing in your weekly envelope, or giving online through the parish websites through WeShare. We need to not only spiritually weather this storm, but we need to financially weather this storm also.

Finally, I am praying for all of you. Please keep me in your prayers, and let us grow closer to Christ together.

Take Good Care,

Fr. Bryan T. Reif