



St. John Catholic Church

Est. 1917

March 21, 2020

To All The Parishioners of St John, St Peter and St Patrick,

Greetings!!! I miss seeing you!

After a week into the social distancing that we are all practicing and the suspension of public Mass, I must confess I am getting bored. I can only wash my truck so many times (that is a joke).

In all seriousness, we are living in unprecedented times. To think that the Church, which has been around for 2000 years offering Mass under the worst situations that have affected humanity – wars, natural disasters, extreme political oppression – would have to suspend public Mass is almost unimaginable. As a consolation, please be absolutely assured that the Mass is still being offered each and every day by your priests for the salvation of the world and for the end to this international pandemic. The grace of the Mass affects the world even when there is no congregation present because the Mass is Christ's sacrifice on the Cross, and that is an event that had eternal consequences whether celebrated with one million people present or just the priest. The Angels and the Saints and all of Heaven is present for every Mass, it is never a private occasion. Please take consolation in this.

Second, I encourage you to spend this extra time and solitude for growth in your own spiritual life. We are in the season of Lent. All the sacrifices we are all making can become part of our Lenten sacrifices to God. So, use the extra time wisely to pray! Pray the Rosary every single day for healing and health for you and your loved ones and the world! Also be sure to pray the Mass by watching on TV or the internet. You can watch the Mass on TV on EWTN. You can also watch Mass livestreamed on the internet on Youtube. Finally, you are welcome to come to Church to pray. The parishes are open every Sunday 9am-noon and St Peter daily from 11am-1pm. And priests are present for confession, so GO TO CONFESSION IT WILL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER!!!

We are still doing much to carry on the work of the gospel. We are feeding the poor and homeless through our program at St Peter that both St Patrick and St John participates in. We are providing showers for those in need. Our food pantries are operating. We are taking calls at the parish and meeting with parishioners in need. Our priests are still taking care of the sick at VCU Hospital (MCV) as we normally do.

If you are in need of something, spiritually or materially, please email our office so that we can help. Many people are in need at this time – lonely, confused, physically ill, financially worried, becoming unemployed - and our parishes are here to help those in need.

Finally, I must make a plea to all the faithful who love and support the parish. We at the parish are in need of support in order to keep all the good things we do going. While Mass is suspended we are cut off from our ability to ask for assistance and receive support from you. Many of you have gone to e-giving, which can be accessed through the parish website, as a way to support the parish so that the parish can still pay its bills even in times like this. But many parishioners do not feel comfortable giving online. To all parishioners I am humbly asking to please continue supporting the parish and the good work we are doing even though you are not able to attend Mass. We still have ongoing ministries that need supported, electric and utility bills that need paid, health insurance costs for employees and all the other regular costs that it takes to operate a parish. We are doing everything we can to cut expenses but we still desperately need your generosity. If you are uncomfortable making your regular contribution online, please consider simply mailing in your contribution to the office. You may also call the office and someone will setup e-giving for you. You can also make a contribution with a credit card by calling the office.

Thank you in advance for all your love and prayers and support. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the office and the priests if you have a need or know someone in need. That is what we are here for.

We will get through this. It will be a distant memory and we will look back with gratitude on all the blessings God has showered upon us despite all the crosses and burdens many are carrying.

We priests love you and are praying for you every day as we offer the Mass.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fr. Rossi". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Fr. Rossi