



ST. AUGUSTINE PARISH

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25 March 2020
(Solemnity of the Annunciation)

My dear friends:

Praised be Jesus Christ! Now and forever!

During these most difficult and indeed scary days, I have been edified by your faith and your commitment to our beloved St. Augustine Parish. Thank you to the many of you who have reached out to the priests, deacons and seminarian. We are all doing well.

It is heartbreaking that we are unable to gather together for the celebration of the Most Holy Eucharist, which the Second Vatican Council reminds us is the “source and summit of our Christian lives.” All of our daily actions are (or should be) directed towards it and flow from its sacred nourishment.

Father Michael and I continue to offer the Holy Mass each day privately in the rectory chapel. One of us always takes the intention for the day, while the other one offers Mass for the faith and well-being of the people of St. Augustine and for an end to the pandemic. You are all remembered in our daily prayers.

The work in the church building continues. Last Friday they installed a new mural behind the high altar; and just yesterday placed the borders around the murals. Most of the work near the ceiling is completed... although there is still some touchup work. I’ve been making the trip to the ceiling almost daily... which is quite a feat since I don’t particularly like heights. Although I’ve come to realize in this project that I’m not afraid of heights; just gravity!

The local statue restoration artist has continued her work with Judy Ford and Suzanne Ritchie. The statue of St. Joseph has been restored and cleaned; and the statue of the Blessed Virgin is nearing completion. They’ve also been working on the restoration of the Grotto to Our Lady of Lourdes. Thanks to Jim Atkins who has updated the electrical work in the grotto. The hand of St. Bernadette has been fixed and the painting of Our Lady and Bernadette I believe will take place soon. Surprisingly the arms of the Sacred Heart statue are ready for painting, but I haven’t seen his body!?!?!?

Father Michael and I are working to find ways to assist you in your faith life during these days of isolation. I encourage to you visit the parish website for devotions and other assistance. This is also how we will get word out to the parish about the different things happening.
www.staugustines.net

We are offering our people the opportunity to pray before the Blessed Sacrament in the gym Monday – Friday from 8AM – 9AM. I hope you can find time to join us... there is lots of room for social distancing!

We don't have the ability (because of lack of knowledge mostly) to live-stream liturgies from St. Augustine... I encourage you to use the link on our webpage to watch the Mass from the Cathedral. In particular, I would encourage you to watch last week's homily from Bishop Foys.

Bishop Foys has instructed the priests to "stay home". If you need anything, even if it is just to chat for a little while and get some encouragement, give us a call!

And just today, the Bishop has called for all the parish churches to ring their bells for five (5) minutes at the Hour of Mercy – 3:00PM – to call the faithful to pray for the world and then end of the pandemic. I would encourage you to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy at this time... if you are unfamiliar with it, you will find the instructions on the parish website.

Just like everyone else, we still need to pay our bills, if you are able, I would be grateful if you could continue to make your weekly contributions to the parish. You are welcome to mail your envelopes or drop them off; or you are welcome to give electronically via our website.

Finally, my bulletin article for last weekend (which most of you never saw) was written on the Feast of St. Patrick. He once wrote: "I give unceasing thanks to my God, who kept me faithful *in the day of my testing*. Today I can offer him sacrifice with confidence, giving myself *as a living victim* to Christ, my Lord, *who kept me safe throughout all my trials*."

In these days of trial and fear, let us turn to the Lord completely. Do not let the devil take a hold on you or give you doubt. God loves us! He loves us from the top of our heads to the tip of our toes and every aspect in-between... the good, the bad and the ugly.

And just as we end our Masses, we end this letter together praying:

Saint Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle,
be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the devil;
may God rebuke him, we humbly pray;
and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly host,
by the power of God, trust into hell
Satan and all the evil spirits
who prowl through the world seeking the ruin of souls.
Amen!

And may almighty God bless you, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen!

Very Reverend Daniel L. Schomaker
Pastor