



ST. AUGUSTINE PARISH

413 W. 19TH ST. • COVINGTON, KY 41014
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1 April 2020

My dear friends:

Praised be Jesus Christ! Now and forever!

I hope this letter finds you physically and spiritually well. Each morning Father Michael and I continue to celebrate a private Mass for the parish intentions as well as for the faith of our people and an end to the current COVID-19 Pandemic.

I have been reflecting in my prayer lately about the Holy Mass and how vital it is to our life as Christians, and I am distraught that we are unable to join together to offer this highest form of praise and adoration and thanksgiving to our Good God. But amidst my disappointment there is hope... there is ALWAYS hope!

We learn in our catechism that when we gather to pray at Holy Mass, the entire Church is present. And this is because, whether or not there is a congregation, the Mass is public prayer, public worship. So, when Father Michael and I offer Mass privately, your prayers, your needs, your intentions, your fears, your excitements, your disappointments and indeed all of your faith, hope and love are joined to ours. The priest always gathers the prayers of his people when he outstretches his arms in prayer... just as Jesus stretched out his arms between Heaven and Earth on the Cross.

In addition, when I say the entire Church, I mean the Church Militant (those of us still fighting our way through this world) and the Church Triumphant (those who have reached their Heavenly reward). So, when the Holy Mass is celebrated privately by a priest, he is NEVER alone... he is surrounded by the saints and angels who worship the Almighty with him; this is also true when we gather as a community. Our church building is always full, because the whole Church is at prayer during Mass.

Although we will not be together for Holy Week, the Sacred Triduum or Easter, I hope you will join our whole community of faith in a spiritual way.

On Saturday, April 4, 2020 at 10:00am, I will join Bishop Foys at the Cathedral for the celebration of the Diaconate Ordination of Joseph Rielage. Because of the social distancing norms, we will only be able to have 10 individual present for this ordination. However, we will be live-streaming the Mass on the Diocesan Website – www.covdio.org. If you are able, I would encourage you to support Deacon-elect Rielage by watching. Note: only four (4) members of his family can be present. Please pray for Deacon-elect Rielage as he makes this lifelong commitment to serve the people of our Diocese of Covington.

On Saturday evening at 4:30pm, Father Michael, Deacon Jordan, Seminarian Devin and I will join the Bishop and Cathedral priests for the celebration of Palm Sunday. This Mass will be live-streamed and recorded. I encourage your prayerful participation. The Holy See has instructed that parishes are not permitted to bless and distribute palms until after we are free of the pandemic. Our palms arrived yesterday, and we will store them until such a time as we can gather to bless and distribute them.

Beginning on Palm Sunday (April 5, 2020) through Easter Sunday, I am going to attempt to be technologically savvy. Each day I will post a video to our parish website to encourage and support you in the faith. Please pray for me... I hate seeing myself "on-screen". But, I love each of you enough to make this sacrifice 😊.

From Palm Sunday through Spy Wednesday, the priests and seminarians will gather for a Holy Hour from 6:30 – 7:30pm in the rectory chapel which we will live-stream. We will pray a Rosary and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy during this time of quiet with the Lord... I hope you will join us for all or some of these Holy Hours. I'm told you should be able to get them on your smart phones as well as the parish website.

The Chrism Mass will be celebrated by the Bishop with the Vicars General and the Deans on Holy Thursday morning at 10:00am. It will be live-streamed.

The priests from St. Augustine will join the Cathedral in celebrating the Sacred Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil). These celebrations will only be live-streamed (not recorded) at 6:00pm, 3:00pm and 8:30pm respectively. I hope you will join us with your prayers.

Easter Sunday will be live-streamed from St. Augustine at 10:00am... again, I hope you will join us for this most solemn celebration.

A few other things of note:

1. I have made the decision to suspend the Summer Festival. The preparations have already started, and there is no way of knowing if our society will be able to gather together in large groups by the middle of June. We hope to move it to the end of August when we will celebrate our 150th Anniversary!
2. Night at the Races has also been suspended... they are looking at a date in September.
3. Sadly, we also have to postpone First Penance and First Holy Communion until we are back worshipping in the church together... please pray in a special way for our second graders who long (as we all do) for the Eucharist.

The work in the church building continues... Monday they started painting the columns to look like stone... I am in utter amazement. My artistic stills usually stop at stick people!

Thank you to everyone who has mailed in or dropped off your church support... I am so very grateful!

Finally, please continue to pray! Pick up your bible and read! Grab your Rosary beads! And remember that we subscribe as a Parish to www.formed.org. This is a website full of videos, audio books, regular electronic books and much more to help you grow in your faith... for FREE! I strongly encourage you to use it. You no longer need a parish code, just look up St. Augustine Church Covington. Did I mention that it's FREE?!

In these difficult, and indeed scary times, please remember just how much you are loved, by the clergy of the parish and most especially by our God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit!

If you need ANYTHING – call the rectory/office – 859-431-3943.

Very Reverend Daniel L. Schomaker
Pastor

PS – The image of the holy card is from a stained-glass window in the parish rectory.