

SAINT ANNE - SAINT PATRICK PARISH
MARCH 22, 2020

March 20, 2020

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We have been facing difficult challenges with the spread of the Corona virus! It caused us a lot of anxiety, fear and stress. Just three days ago, Bishop McManus announced that all Public Masses will be suspended until further notice. He added that "the obligation to take part in the Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation is hereby lifted."

This announcement isolates our parish community from the Eucharist, which is central to our act of worship. However, we may be physically apart, but our faith assures us that we are all in this together and God is with us in these extraordinary circumstances!

What can we do as a parish community to sustain each other in faith and to remain steadfast in this time of trials? Let me offer you some suggestions from the Pastoral Letter of Bishop McManus, *Hope in Time of Pandemic*.

Pray. "Prayer will ground us in the realization that we are not alone."

- Attend daily and weekend Masses online. Follow the links from our parish website at www.stannestpatrickparish.com or the Diocese of Worcester website at www.worcesterdiocese.org or through any Catholic Channels available through your cable networks and radio stations.
- Pray the Rosary. Pope Francis invited "every family, every member of the faithful to pray the Rosary" as "an invocation and supplication of the Father's mercy to deliver us from this pandemic."
- Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet or other devotional prayers at home together with your family.
- Pray the *Prayer in Time of Pandemic*, prepared by the Diocese of Worcester.
- We, the Assumptionist Community, will continue to celebrate Mass privately to offer your daily Mass intentions.
- St. Anne Church will continue to be open to individuals from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM for private prayer and devotion. Other areas of St. Anne Shrine will also be opened during the Spring season.

Listen. "We must be attentive to the advice of healthcare professionals to protect ourselves."

- If you are sick, please stay at home. Follow proper personal hygiene and health etiquette. Be mindful of the social distancing protocols.
- Follow updates on the Corona virus through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at www.cdc.gov or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts website at www.mass.gov

Respond. "We must also be attentive to the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of others." Consider what you can safely do to help others.

- Be in contact with the elderly and those who are isolated.
- Provide food or supplies to those who are in need.
- Support our food pantry. You can drop your food donations at the St. Anne Church basement during regular office hours from 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon and 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM.
- Refer people who are in need of food or other resources to our St. Vincent de Paul Society. Their members will be on call to assist those who might need food and other resources. You can call them at 508-347-6398.
- Continue supporting our parish even though Masses have been suspended. In order that the work and ministries of the parish may continue during this time, we are asking all of you to support our parish financially in any of the following ways:
 - Mail in your weekly envelopes.
 - Mail a check for your weekly contribution.
 - Consider giving online through our website Online Giving page.
 - If you have any questions call our Business Office at 508-347-7339.

Parish Offices will remain closed to the public. Please communicate with us by email or phone during regular office hours. Please call us for questions regarding Funerals, Baptisms, Confessions, Weddings, Pastoral Care for the Sick etc. You can call the office at 508-347-7338.

The Shrine Gift Shop will remain open during regular hours from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, following social distancing protocols and until directives on retail stores will be implemented. You can call the Gift Shop at 508-347-7461.

We will keep you posted for other updates either through our website, our Facebook page or through our Flocknote page.

And finally we call upon the Lord to protect us and strengthen us during this difficult moment. We join the Prophet Azariah in his prayer:

*Now we follow you with our whole heart, we fear you and we seek your face.
Do not put us to shame, but deal with us in your kindness and great mercy.
Deliver us in accord with your wonders, and bring glory to your name, O Lord:
(Daniel 3: 41-43)*

O Blessed Mother, Comforter of the Afflicted, pray for us!
O Good Saint Anne, intercede for us!

In Christ.

Fr. Alex A. Castro, AA
Pastor



My dear friends in Christ,

As we confront almost hourly news reports about rising cases of Coronavirus, additional measures to restrict exposures to the threat of this insidious virus, and concerns about our own health and the wellbeing of our loved ones, we can become very anxious. Yet we are a people of hope, grounded in the faith that God is always with us. As your bishop, I write to you today in these troubling times to remind you of this unshakeable tenet of our Catholic faith.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, in his encyclical Spe Salvi (Saved by Hope) stressed how the virtue of hope is critical for anyone who encounters suffering: “[T]he present, even if it is arduous, can be lived and accepted if it leads towards a goal, if we can be sure of this goal, and if this goal is great enough to justify the effort of the journey” (Spe Salvi 1). What is that goal for us today? I propose that our first goal is to maintain a courageous spirit of optimism and perseverance during this health crisis. We are responsible for being good stewards of our bodies and for following the advice of medical professionals to minimize risk. By virtue of our baptism we are also called as good citizens to care for others in need, in good times and in bad.

In Spe Salvi, Benedict XVI noted that “It is not science that redeems man: Man is redeemed by love. This applies even in terms of this present world. . . . The human being needs unconditional love. He needs the certainty which makes him say: “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:38-39). (SS26)

As people of faith, let us not lose sight of the fact that our ultimate goal is life eternal, to one day enjoy God’s life and love eternally. That love is experienced even in this life when we are cared for in times of sickness with compassion, and we in turn become agents of God’s love when we help others in need.

So what can we do? I suggest we consider three things: Pray, Listen and Respond.

Pray the Prayer In Time of Pandemic which we are sharing through our parishes and institutions. Why? Prayer will ground us in the realization that, first of all, we are not alone. Even when seemingly no one else hears us in our pleas, God always hears us. It reminds us that the truly important things in life are bigger than us and we must set aside our pride to focus on what is truly important in life.

Listen and Respond. Our faith reminds us that grace builds on nature. If we are attentive to the instructions of those around us we will be given the grace to respond. Hence, we must be attentive to the advice of healthcare professionals to protect ourselves but we must also be attentive to the spiritual, emotional and physical needs of others. Pope Francis has observed that his greatest concern regarding how this crisis is unfolding in Italy is that of isolation. Feeling alone and feeling abandoned engender fear, not hope. Are young and elderly family members scared or at risk and need our assurances and help? Are neighbors alone and in need of wellness checks so as to not feel abandoned?

As baptized members of the Body of Christ, we also have a responsibility to the greater community of faith. In the weeks ahead, our faith life may be greatly challenged by not being able to attend Mass. We will have to fast from the very sustenance for which our souls yearn during this Lent, the Holy Eucharist. Again I stress - do not lose hope. As your parishes communicate with you, I hope they will remind you that you can at least pray together with the Catholic community in our diocese through our Sunday and Daily Masses on the internet and on Spectrum (Charter) Channel 193. You may also have access to the Mass on Catholic TV from Boston if you are on a different cable company or satellite TV. You can make a Spiritual Communion as you spiritually prepare for the day, God willing, when you can return to the Banquet of the Lord at Easter.

As members of the Diocese of Worcester, I also implore you not to lose sight of how we are serving so many people in need every day through our parish ministries and our diocesan agencies. Your call to be good stewards through the parish offertory is needed now as much as ever, as well as your continued support for the annual Partners in Charity Appeal which is a lifeline for diocesan-wide service to thousands of people who are physically and spiritually in need. However, in light of these difficult times, I have suspended the activities of our diocesan capital campaign, Legacy of Hope, until these difficult times are behind us, in order to stay focused on addressing present needs. I encourage you to take advantage of online giving portals for your parish and Partners in Charity or simply continue to support your offertory by mail.

In closing, I ask that you join me in the *Prayer in Time of Pandemic* and that you do so every day until this health crisis has passed.

May God protect you and your loved ones through this time of trial.

With every prayerful best wish, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Most Reverend Robert J. McManus Bishop of Worcester

MASS INTENTIONS

- SATURDAY MARCH 21**
4:00 PM + Jack Porazzo - Maureen Keane-Bottino Family
- SUNDAY MARCH 22**
8:00 AM + Bernard Berthiaume - Daughter
10:00 AM + Karl Nauman - Victoria Boulay
12:00 PM + Raelene Rea - 16th Anniversary - Husband & Family
6:00 PM Parishioners and Pilgrims
- MONDAY MARCH 23**
7:15 AM + Francis DeTour - Wesley & Joyce Laford
10:00 AM + Gertrude Lafleche - Regina & Joseph Klundt
- TUESDAY MARCH 24**
7:15 AM Special Intention for Lotti Jackson - Mary Brady
10:00 AM Coronavirus Victims
- WEDNESDAY MARCH 25**
7:15 AM Healthcare Workers
10:00 AM + Mr. & Mrs. Paul St. Laurent - Daughter
- THURSDAY MARCH 26**
7:15 AM First Responders
10:00 AM + Robert Peltier - Wife, Linda & Daughters
- FRIDAY MARCH 27**
7:15 AM + Joan Cancelliere
- SATURDAY MARCH 28**
7:30 AM Coronavirus Victims
4:00 PM + Theresa St. Laurent - 2nd Anniversary - Marius & Joan
- SUNDAY MARCH 29**
8:00 AM + Deceased Parishioners
10:00 AM + Roger Martel - 35th Anniversary & + Judith Martel - 15th Anniversary - Family
12:00 PM + D. Charles Glinsky - 5th Anniversary - Son & Family
6:00 PM Parishioners and Pilgrims



SANCTUARY LAMPS

- MARCH -
St. Joachim Chapel -
Deceased Parishioners
- St. Anne Church -
*In Memory of Rosina & John Courtney -
Those we love don't go away, they walk beside us every day.
Unseen, unheard, but always near; still loved, still missed and very dear. - Daughter & Family*

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE 2019-20

MARCH 14 & 15

- Weekly Offertory - \$3,809
- Parish Support - \$80
- Maintenance - \$31
- Church in Latin America - \$25

THANK YOU!



Collected to date; \$14,421 (27% of goal of \$53,200) from 53 gifts. 53 is 27% of total number of gifts given last year.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

- Monday: Is 65:17-21; Ps 30:2, 4-6, 11-13; Jn 4:43-54
- Tuesday: Ez 47:1-9, 12; Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9; Jn 5:1-16
- Wednesday: Is 7:10-14, 8:10; Ps 40:7-11; Heb 10:4-10; Lk 1:26-38
- Thursday: Ex 32:7-14; Ps 106:19-23; Jn 5:31-47
- Friday: Wis 2:1, 12-22; Ps 34:17-21, 23; Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30
- Saturday: Jer 11:18-20; Ps 7:2-3, 9-12; Jn 7:40-53
- Sunday: Ez 37:12-14; Ps 130:1-8; Rom 8:8-11; Jn 11:1-45

PRAYER IN TIME OF PANDEMIC



O God, whose Only Begotten Son bore the weight of human suffering for our salvation, please hear the prayers of Your Church for our sick brothers and sisters and deliver us from this time of trial.

Open our ears and our hearts to the voice of Your Son:

Be not afraid, for I am with you always.

Bless all doctors and nurses, researchers and public servants; give us the wisdom to do what is right and the faith to endure this hour, that we might gather once again to praise Your name in the heart of Your Church, delivered from all distress and confident in Your mercy.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen