

Saint Joseph CATHOLIC CHURCH

September 21, 2020

Monday of the Twenty-fifth Week of Ordinary Time

Dear Parishioners of St. Joseph Parish:

I hope that this note finds you and your families remaining healthy! Walking over to my office to write this email, I could not help but feel that fall is in the air. It seems like this summer went by way too fast...

One of the first things that I wish to share this month surrounds the installation of our new bishop, Edward Melasic. He was installed on Monday, September 14 (The Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross) as the twelfth bishop of the Diocese of Cleveland. As I am continuing my recovery, I was unable to attend the Mass but watched it on TV. During this homily, which you can watch completely on the Diocesan website (www.dioceseofcleveland.org) he raised great points about the crosses that we carry in life. All of these, he reminded us, should lead us to the joy of the Resurrection. Whatever pain or suffering we feel, much like Jesus experienced, should be seen in the hope of the Resurrection. It will get better! He specifically talked about COVID-19 by saying "this cross can be a springboard for the renewal of our church". I believe that this is true – not only at a Diocesan level but also here at St. Joseph. I have written before how this time of social distancing and my own treatment has afforded me the opportunity for more prayer and deliberate contact, even if through technology, with family. In some way, that has allowed me to refocus priorities and regain perspective. Maybe a similar thing has happened for you? As we continue to navigate this pandemic, the individual changes we make will shape what we can offer one another, our communities, and our parish. Along with our new bishop, let us be open to the renewal that the Lord may be working in our own lives...

As much as we look forward to this renewal, we also know that COVID-19 is still very much a part of our daily lives. Unfortunately, as I wrote in a recent Pastor's Column, we had to cancel our Annual Parish Service Day. Yet, that does not mean that request for assistance cannot be met or are going unmet, just that they may be met in a different way. Please, as I have said throughout our journey through this pandemic, call the Parish Office and we will do what we are able to do to assist you. We are here to help!

With our seasonal change and the approach of cold and flu season, I offer a few reminders of what has been asked of all Catholics and parishes by the Diocese out of charity for one another, especially as we gather for Mass:

- Prior to coming to church, please continue to self-monitor for signs of illness: especially a fever of 100.4, cough, or shortness of breath; if these are present, you should not come to Mass and perhaps, consider a follow-up with your medical provider.
- From your arrival at church and until you leave, Catholics above the age of two are obligated to wear a face-covering the entire time while in the building, except for the reception of Holy

Communion. One special note is that those with medical conditions, such as severe asthma or COPD would be exempt from this obligation. When approaching for Communion, please leave your mask on until after the priest or Eucharistic Minister places the host into your hand; then step to the side, remove your mask, and place the host in your mouth, and replace your mask.

- Please remember that once the last person has received Communion, you are free to sit or kneel for silent prayer. There is no need to wait for the priest to repose the Blessed Sacrament or finish purifications.
- Even though they were emailed to everyone for whom we had an email in May, our complete COVID-19 policies and procedures can be always found at www.sjohio.org/covid.

Earlier this year, I wrote about our *MyStJoseph* portal. I would like to remind you that not only does it allow you to update your own parish records, but to communicate with other parishioners. If you'd like to sign up for this, please launch your web browser and go to my.sjohio.org, click "Need a login?", and enter the email you received my letter on (because this is the one that we have for you on file); hit Find Me. Once you're found, an email will be sent to you; if you're not found, you can email office@sjohio.org and they can help you. Once you receive an email with your information, you'll have 24 hours to use that link. When in the program and setting up your account, you can choose what information is shared with other members of the parish. Out of respect for your privacy, no information is shared with others unless you choose it to be shared. You control whatever information you'd like to share once you sign-up. You can do this on *MyStJoseph* by clicking on home, my account, personal preferences, and following the screen prompts. Once you allow your information to be shared, you can find other parishioners who have also allowed their contact information to be shared.

In conclusion, I hope that you and your family will stay healthy. Please know that we continue to welcome you to join us for Mass in person or via the live-stream of each Sunday's 10am Mass! I will write again next month. Know that Father Kevin and I, and our entire Parish Staff, continue to keep you in our prayers. Remember, even if you are not attending Mass, the bulletin can be found by visiting our website. This will allow you to stay current on information each week. My chemotherapy has concluded and I hope to be strong enough, particularly in my legs, to return to full-time ministry October 1. I will have follow-up tests next month, which the doctor expects will show remission. I hope that will be the case! I remain thankful for your prayers and ask for them to continue, not only for me, but for all who are sick and their caregivers.

St. Joseph, pray for us!

~Fr. Joe