

1 April 2020

### Notes on recent developments from Father Joe

As the ongoing situation continues to unfold, I hope that you are taking extra time to pray both individually and as a family. Here are some reminders and announcements

- At the direction of the Bishop all regularly scheduled confessions including Drive-thru Confessions are presently suspended until further notice. Confession are by appointment only at this time. Please call and leave a message for me at my office at St Marcus if you need to go to confession during this time and we will work something out. 320-743-2481
- Mass Intentions Make great Easter gifts. Have Mass offered for someone? What could be better than an eternal gift! We are still accepting Mass intentions for your loved ones living and deceased you can simply mail them to the parish office. The diocese has set the suggested donation for a Mass intention at ten dollars. This is also another spiritual way we can combat the virus. If you know someone with COVID-19 and would like to have Mass offered for them please send it in and drop me a note and we will prioritize it. We will not publish the person's name in connection with the sickness but I have some flexibility and can work an extra Mass Intention in once a week or so. Please be sure to write the names of your loved ones clearly and limit the number of names to two and add a generic word like, "and family" if there are more than two so my little brain can get it all in!
- Please Remember to talk with your kids about what is going on with the COVID-19 pandemic. These things do not happen real often. When visiting with your kids let your guard down, allow them to ask questions, ask them how what they are thinking about when the look off kilter, and most importantly take time to pray with them.
- So often Holy Week is overrun by sports and spring activities, some of you are learning that I love sports as much as anyone else. I think we have an opportunity here to re-prioritize Holy Week and put it at the Top of our schedules this time of year. As families you can start or restart some family traditions that remind you, as a family, the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus. I will have some suggestions out for family events for Holy Week in light of the situation.
- As I say every week, remember we are not completely powerless. We have two great advantages over COVID 19. They are: Our spiritual ability in prayer to take refuge in the Sacred Heart of Jesus for safety, and to use our God given self-awareness and our mind to change and create different habits so as to contain and mitigate COVID-19.