

Dear Parishioners,

I hope that everyone is doing well and is enjoying the beautiful fall weather today! Just a brief letter to update you on a few things.

First of all, we continue to observe special protocols at Mass and other Church functions in order to attempt to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. I thank you for your continued patience and observance of these protocols. Please remember that we do these actions (wearing masks, sanitization, spacing of the pews, etc.) in accordance with the direction of our religious superior, Father Jim Bissonette.

Second, as we had a Blue Mass last month to pray for our law enforcement, firefighters and first responders, so we will be celebrating what is traditionally known as a White Mass on Wednesday, October 28 at 5:30pm at Holy Spirit in Two Harbors. A White Mass is a mass to pray specifically for our medical personnel- doctors, nurses, etc., who traditionally have worn white lab-coats and nursing outfits- hence a "white" Mass. Please join us to pray for the safety and health of those who serve our health, especially during these intense and difficult circumstances with the presence of the coronavirus.

Lastly, I just wish to offer to all of us a word of encouragement. I know that many people are feeling fatigued by all of the difficulties, inconveniences and dangers that the pandemic presents. People are also becoming fatigued with the cancellations, protocols and regulations. Everyone is hoping for a return to normalcy soon. Some are still suffering from sickness due to the virus, and some are grieving the death of loved ones.

My friends, remember that even in these difficult times as a nation and as a world, our God is with us! He knows our struggle, He sees our frustrations and pain, and He is here to comfort us, to console us and to strengthen us. We encounter His loving presence and consolation primarily through the celebration of the sacraments and through time spent in personal prayer with the Lord. We also experience it through the care and loving concern of others. And so, two practical words- first, pray, pray and pray some more! The pandemic has forced us to consider what is most important in life, and I pray and hope that for us as Christians, that means that we have made the decision that it is God, and our relationship with Him that is most important in our lives. And we demonstrate that decision by following it up with the determination to make daily prayer and conversation with God a priority, to love God above all else, to be as involved as we are able and comfortable with given our health needs and concerns, in Mass, the sacrament of reconciliation, Eucharistic Adoration, parish events, family faith formation and opportunities to learn more about our faith, such as the Basics of Catholicism series on Tuesday evenings, and bible studies at our parishes.

Second, let's make the decision to be examples of loving concern and joyful trust in God to others in our lives. I know that this can be difficult when we ourselves may be feeling weary, frustrated and overwhelmed by all that is happening in our world, but my brothers and sisters, so much good can be done in a world such as ours by something as simple as a kind word to

another, a kind gesture, a thoughtful deed or the promise of prayer. Our world desperately needs hope right now, and the surest source of real and lasting hope is knowing and loving our Lord Jesus Christ! As best as we can, let's be signs of light and joy for those around us. Jesus is Lord! Jesus is in control, no matter how out of control our world may seem. God loves you, and He is with you!

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me!

In Christ our Lord,

Fr. Steve Laflamme