

Dear Saint Bede Family,

Welcome to another pastor's update for both last week and this week.

Thank you for your many emails, comments, likes, written notes, and calls about the Holy Week Liturgies. And a special thanks to all those who made them possible...both on screen and behind the scenes. Thank you to Crystal Harshbarger, Brittany Kinstetter, and Sam Samorian who collectively did the digital ushering and online commenting, the camera work, and sound work. A huge thanks to Aaron Renninger and Carina Sturdy, and the singing and reading of Claudia Kessel, Matt Sanderson, and Jackson Pauley. We are also grateful for the trumpeting of Paul Lindsey on Easter Sunday Morning. Many have commented on the added solemnity and beauty of these holy days and appreciated the extra touches especially in these strange times.

For the rest of the days that we're in stay-at-home mode: **Our Masses, on Monday through Saturday, will be livestreamed from the Blessed Sacrament Chapel at 9:00 a.m.** to allow us the possibility to adore the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle in the main church Nave where social distancing for 10 people is more easily achieved. **On Sunday mornings, Mass will be livestreamed at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. in English and at 2:00 p.m. in Spanish in the Nave.** In the Easter season, music is allowed. Therefore, along with a priest and a deacon, there will be an organist and a cantor, someone on the camera, and someone on sound to blend the various microphones. We will continue posting the prayer for Spiritual Communion. The Deacons will pray it with you.

Meanwhile, the parish staff continues to do the work of keeping in touch with those entrusted to their care, and this work is being done in new, different, and creative ways. The Youth groups—both English and Spanish—continue to meet virtually to discuss the video each is ask to view that week (at their own timing). Our children preparing for First Communion are completing their preparation to be ready after we return to the Nave. The adult formation classes, our small groups, and the bereavement support group for those mourning loved ones are all gathering via Zoom or phone. Our elect also “meet” regularly by Zoom, and their numbers are growing as new inquirers ask to be prepared for a future Easter. Deacon Greg and the prison ministry write to inmates who have been part of their Bible studies. Inmates receive the same reflection materials we use for the seasons. Shannon, at the Williamsburg House of Mercy, invites us to volunteer and see for ourselves the good work they are doing. Next week, they plan to begin delivering groceries to seniors and the homebound. Therefore, if someone you know needs groceries or is afraid of shopping in grocery stores at this time, email or call Brenda at the Williamsburg House of Mercy. Alpha had their last meeting this past Monday night.

Our Finance Council closely monitors the cash flow, and we so appreciate your replies to our appeals to keep up your Sunday offerings—either through the virtual real offering at the normal time in Sunday Mass or by online giving or by way of the US Postal Service. Your great generosity is truly heartwarming. At the end of this month, we will begin our work on next year's budget, which we know will be greatly impacted by this virus and the changes it has already wrought.

For those who may not be connected with us for either Sunday or weekday Masses, let me remind you that you do not need a Facebook account to be part of Mass at Saint Bede or to be linked with those you used to sit with on Saturday evenings or Sunday mornings. Crystal, our communications wiz, has made it possible for us to view these Masses from our Saint Bede website home page: www.bedeva.org

Also, over the past few weeks, I have periodically participated in webinars with other pastors and with leaders and staff from the various agencies in the Commonwealth. Last night, we heard from the Department of Social Services who repeated over and over again, “If you or a loved one or an acquaintance is in need of anything—either food, monetary assistance, unemployment insurance, help with childcare (if you and they are essential workers), **please call 211.**” 211 lines are open 24/7, and trained operators will direct you to those you need to talk with. They are ready, willing, and waiting. Don’t hesitate if you have a need or question.

As many of you know, this Sunday is the Sunday of Divine Mercy. At Masses this Sunday, the image of Christ, the Divine Mercy, we will be visible in our livestream. We will also post the Divine Mercy Chaplet on our webpage and the Facebook page. Reading material, video viewing suggestions, diaries of Saint Faustina, pictures, and bumper stickers of the Divine Mercy Christ are available on a table in the Commons and will remain there for another week. Also, Crystal has included the link to the Divine Mercy Apostolate with information on how to celebrate this Feast in a time when confessions and communion are not as available as in other years. Some have asked us to livestream a holy hour from Saint Bede...which we are not allowed to do. Please consult the Divine Mercy Apostolate for their livestream.

Lastly, in the past two weeks, the following have died in the Lord, parish members: Bob Tweed, Joan Jones, George Welch, Deann Knight Bryant, (daughter of Margie and Emma Knight) and Hulda Smith. Please keep their families in your prayers. These families have opted to have memorial or funeral Masses after the restrictions are lifted and larger gatherings are permitted. Tonight, let me thank you, along with her husband Tom (or TC), for your prayers for Hulda who was in the ICU suffering the effects of the Coronavirus. Tom, his brother, and I were able to be with her in the room before she died and were with her outside the room, with our hands on the glass, as she breathed her last. The whole time after we left the room and until she died, two nurses held her hands and stroked her hair. It was a beautiful death and a comforting sight for TC. These ICU nurses need our prayers for the compassion they give!!! Also, please remember Charles Zerafa, the brother of Al Zerafa, and Jenniffer Anderson-Davis, the sister of Earl Anderson who also died this week. (Jenniffer also died from the Coronavirus.) Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. And let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.

Well, that is all I can think of at this time. If you need anything...do not be shy to call or email. We’re here for you and yours.

Pace e bene,

(Rev Msgr.) Joseph P. Lehman

Pastor