

Never Isolated in Christ

YOUR WEEKLY VIEW BEHIND THE MASK OF ASSUMPTION PARISH

APRIL 20, 2020

*For thus said the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel:
By waiting and by calm you shall be saved,
in quiet and in trust shall be your strength.*

*Truly, the LORD is waiting to be gracious to you,
truly, he shall rise to show you mercy;
For the LORD is a God of justice:
happy are all who wait for him!*

-Isaiah 30:15, 18

Pastor's Note

Dear Assumption Parishioners,

The news has been mixed lately. On the one hand, there are signs of hope. Social distancing has worked to keep our hospitals and healthcare workers from being overwhelmed! We have experienced deaths, all of them tragic, but fewer than might have been without the measures. On the other hand, the experts are warning us that there will be no return to normal. Even if we are allowed to leave our homes again soon, we may face many months where only very small groups are permitted, where mask wearing is the norm, and where six feet becomes the new "close contact."

We simply do not know what the future holds, and I am beginning to worry that we will not see a "normal" Mass again for a few months yet. Our bishops have been wonderful during this crisis, and I trust they will provide us with the maximum flexibility at every stage that also allows us to keep our communities safe and healthy; but I worry that this may not include Mass for a while, and I want our community to prepare for that reality. Nevertheless, please rest assured that I am as anxious to resume public worship as you are, and I am committed to working with Fr. Ross to make sure that your Bellingham priests continue to look for ways we can continue to bring you the Good News and the grace of Jesus Christ, no matter what form that takes. The Lord has not stopped working, and neither have we.

As always, thank you for your prayers and your patience. I continue to take solace in the fact that we are all in this together.

May the risen Lord bless you and your families always!

Fr. Moore

New Procedure for Receiving Communion

With the prospect of an indeterminate suspension of communal Masses, it is important that our parish at least have a system where the faithful can have regular access to communion. For the safety of our community, we absolutely need to avoid anything that would bring people from multiple quarantine groups together, which generally prevents us from scheduling anything on campus that would result in a line or a crowd. So Fr. Moore is going to try to bring communion to our parishioners on their doorsteps. He will be adequately protected and sanitized to keep from spreading anything himself, and this will prevent any quarantine circles from overlapping. The hope is, at least for this first cycle, to make sure each parishioner who would like to is able to receive communion once during the Easter Season. The procedure is as follows:

For those living inside our parish boundaries: Fr. Moore will be visiting multiple Bellingham neighborhoods each week and will be driving house-to-house in each neighborhood on the designated nights. Please sign up to be visited by using this webform. More instructions will be sent out via e-mail before any visits are made.

[Webform Link](#)

For those living outside our parish boundaries: Please use Fr. Moore's Bookings website to sign up for a 15-minute slot for you and your family to receive communion on campus. Our hope is that, with 15-minute time increments, no families will overlap with each other.

[Bookings Link](#)

Parish Boundaries?

Though we talk more about parish registration than we do about parish boundaries these days, Church law is still based on parishes being responsible for specific territories. Because Fr. Moore wanted to limit how far he would drive to deliver communion, the parish boundaries seemed like a logical and fair way to set that limit.

[Our parish boundaries can be found here.](#)

Other notes:

- Unfortunately, we are still unable to bring communion to those living in assisted living and nursing care facilities. If you and your facility supervisors can come up with a creative way to allow us to provide communion safely, please let us know.
- Though many have suggested it, we are not allowed to offer "drive-by" communion services. Bishop Mueggenborg specifically forbade these in his guidance letter to priests on March 13.
- **If you are a Sacred Heart Parishioner**, Fr. Ross has his own method for distributing communion to his parishioners. Please be in touch with him directly. Because of the level of need, we need to focus specifically on Assumption parishioners with this initiative.
- Confessions can also be scheduled on Fr. Moore's Bookings site, though we ask people to prioritize grave needs.

Parish Financial Update

Had Coronavirus not hit us, we were planning to change our bulletin financial section from “Actual Income vs. Budgeted Income” to a year-over-year “FY19 Income vs. FY20 Income.” There were a lot of reasons for this change, but the main one was that, even if we had hit our budgeted income, we were still facing a deficit, so the information presented painted a rosier picture than was the reality. Instead, we have decided that we want our parishioners simply to see whether income is going up year-over-year (which it has to do to keep up with inflation) and that is how we will present financial updates from now on.

Thanks to the extreme generosity of our parishioners, **we are only \$7,000 behind last year even with the Coronavirus shutdown.** Thank you to everyone who made an additional Easter gift. It really did make all the difference.

This time last year, cumulative income: \$777,685

Current fiscal year, cumulative income: \$770,723

We also know that stimulus checks are beginning to arrive. These checks are intended to help families survive reduced or lost income. But for those of us blessed enough to not need the stimulus check to survive, **we encourage you to support a local charity**, all of whom are worried about their bottom lines. Maybe think about Bellingham Food Bank or Lighthouse Mission, both of whom have stayed open to make sure the most vulnerable among us are able to weather this storm.

Archdiocesan Survey

Archbishop Etienne is beginning a Pastoral Planning process in our Archdiocese to determine what the pastoral needs of our people are and how best to address them. He would like to hear from as many Western Washington Catholics as possible. Please spend 15 minutes filling out this survey, which the Archbishop would very much like to have completed by May 08.

[Survey Link \(English\)](#) || [Survey Link \(Spanish\)](#)

Mass @ Home

This week’s scene from Mass at home comes from the Dales family, as they attend our weekly Friday school Mass. Additional pictures of your celebrations at home can be sent to frmoore@assumption.org, to be featured in future letters.

