

Never Isolated in Christ

YOUR WEEKLY VIEW BEHIND THE MASK OF ASSUMPTION PARISH

JULY 03, 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,

Since this pandemic began, we have all heard the phrase “new normal” used over and over again, but the idea never really stuck for me because everything was changing every two weeks. Now, however, despite the increase in COVID-19 cases across the country, I am starting to believe that we are approaching something close to a status quo. We have learned a lot about this disease, about how it works, and about how masks and social distancing can significantly reduce the threat of infection. We have created (and are creating) systems that allow us to celebrate Mass and other sacraments safely. Short of another society-wide lockdown (which I, personally, do not think is possible anymore), we generally know what our parish life is going to look like over the next 6 – 12 months.

So now we begin to adjust to this “new normal,” and as we start to settle in, we start to develop new habits and patterns of life. As I have mentioned before, I hope we do not waste this opportunity. I hope that, with Sunday Mass only available every other week, we begin to explore what it looks like to pray at home as a family. I hope that, with vacations and sports and camps all limited or closed, we can discover the difference between being *busy* and being *enriched* or *fulfilled*.

I also hope that we do not become complacent in our love for others. We may be tempted to fight against this new normal, to push back against regulation, to try to ignore that a pandemic continues to rage. But even if we ourselves feel invulnerable, we have to remember that we live in a society and everything we do can have a direct effect on those around us. We do need to continue to distance, to mask up, to keep our quarantine circles small. We will have far more peace if we embrace this reality, for the sake of our vulnerable neighbors, than if we continue to rail against it in our hearts.

May the Lord bless you, as he always does!

J. Moore

Parish News

Daily Mass, Adoration, and Confession

The three things that remain before we can feel like we have some semblance of regular sacramental life here at Assumption are daily Mass, adoration, and confession. Here we provide an update on the progress of all three:

Confession:

- **We will attempt to offer drop-in confessions again, starting this Saturday, July 04**, from 3:00 p.m. until 4:45 p.m. Confessions will be heard in the entrance to the school. Penitents are asked to line up at the sign near the large cross, and to keep the standard 6-foot distance while in line.
- For the time being, confessions are also still available by appointment [using Fr. Moore's website](#).

Daily Mass:

- Any Mass requires a whole host of ministers to monitor social distancing, check people in, sterilize afterwards, etc. At the moment we are reviewing the list of people who expressed an interest in attending daily Mass to see if we can find enough ministers to take care of all the necessary tasks.
- Once we have the necessary ministers in place, we will send an e-mail to all those who expressed an interest in daily Mass when they signed up for Sunday Mass, informing them which Masses they are cleared to attend.

Adoration:

Adoration refers *both* to adoration before a closed tabernacle and adoration in front of an exposed host in a monstrance. In a sense, adoration means “being able to pray in the church.” Where we mean the previous 23-hour prayer time on Wednesdays using the monstrance, we will explicitly say “exposition.”

- Unfortunately, we do not believe that we can use the Tabernacle chapel while Coronavirus is still a threat. It is too small and lacks any ventilation. The chapel will remain locked, and all prayer will need to be in the main church. Fr. Moore is exploring the possibility of installing a temporary tabernacle in the body of the church to assist with private prayer.
- We will resume Wednesday exposition as soon as our exposition coordinators tell us they have the necessary people committed and ready. That may be as soon as July 08, following the 7:15 a.m. Mass. For the month of July, exposition will conclude at 4:45 p.m. with benediction. We will consider restoring all night exposition in August.
- We are exploring the idea of keeping the church open for prayer 24/7 to anyone with the door code. However, this will require installing security cameras in the church.
- **We have changed the door code.** Those who sign up to receive the new code will now have to agree to our Coronavirus policies in addition to our security policies. The code will first be distributed to our registered Wednesday adorers. Future letters will contain more information for other parishioners to sign up to receive the door code.
- Those without the door code will first be able to pray during Wednesday exposition. We will explore additional times as our systems become established.

Parish Financial Update

Unfortunately, giving began to decrease in May and June and we ended the year **(\$33,372)** behind last year's giving level. However, last year also had 53 Sundays while this year only had 52, so if we ignore the last weekend of last year, it is more accurate to say we ended the year **(\$17,760)** behind last year's giving level. As much as I would like to end the year with an *increase* in giving, it is still a testament to the incredible generosity and dedication of our parishioners that a global pandemic has only set us behind by less than 20K.

While we still love receiving donations by mail, remember you can also now bring them to Mass with you!

Annual Catholic Appeal

As of July 2nd, **258 families** we have pledged **\$87,477** towards our \$91,345 goal. Thank you to everyone who has gotten us this close! Every parishioner should be able to say that they support the mission and ministry of our Archbishop, so if you have not pledged yet, please do so.

Catholic Relief Services

Our brand-new Catholic Relief Services chapter was recently featured in the Northwest Catholic. Check it out!

<http://nwcatholic.org/news/local/bellingham-parishioners-advocate-globally-through-local-crs-chapter.html>

New Parish Mailbox

Closing the office due to COVID-19 caused us to realize just how desperately we needed a parish mailbox, so we recently installed this beauty on the Cornwall Ave. porch of the parish offices.

From now on, if you need to drop something off at the office or for a staff member (like a form, for example), there is no need to ring the bell during office hours! Feel free to place sealed envelopes in our incoming mail slot at whatever hour you want. No postage required!



Other News / Events

Sparks of Faith

Next weekend is the virtual “Sparks of Faith” conference being hosted by St. Mary’s Parish in Anacortes. It is not too late to plan to participate.

More information about the online-event, and the keynote talk by Dr. Mary Healy, can be found at

<https://stmaryanacortes.org/Faith-Formation/Faith-On-Fire>