

St. Walter Parish Newsletter

Issue 7, Vol. I

WITH MARY'S HELP

Dear Parishioners of St. Walter-

I hope all of our mothers enjoyed their very different Mother's Day this year. When we see all the added responsibilities our mothers have undertaken since this pandemic began, they are truly the essential masked superheroes. Our teachers, too, have undergone great changes teaching our children through e-learning. They have adapted well and have risen to the occasion. A big thanks to all teachers, especially the ones we have here at St. Walter. This past Monday, we had a parade through our parking lot where parents and their children had the opportunity to see their teachers, say hello to them and tell them how much they missed them. The turnout of school parents and children was very impressive. Congratulations, Wildcats!

Of all the people we are praying for, let us continue to pray for the most vulnerable: those who are in nursing homes. I cannot imagine losing a parent or grandparent to this terrible disease under these circumstances. Speaking of being so helpless, alone, and fearful, I know that our hearts go out to them and their families. Let us continue to keep them in our prayers.

News from our school is that Mrs. Sharon O'Toole has accepted another position as principal at St. Alexander in Palos Heights. Her letter to school families is included in today's newsletter. On behalf of the school and parish community, we would like to thank Mrs. O'Toole for her four years of dedicated service and we wish her well in her new position. I am beginning to put together a search committee for a new principal for our school.

Thank you to those who been faithful with their contributions. This is certainly a challenging financial climate that we find ourselves in. Since this pandemic is lasting longer than any of us imagined, it is imperative that all of us support our parish with our prayers and our financial support. All we need to do is to bring our weekly contributions to the rectory and place in the mail slot in the front door. The rectory is located at 11722 S. Oakley Avenue. Or you can donate online as so many have done.

Here at St. Walter, we continue to evaluate the best way for our parish to face the current financial challenge. Many parishes are struggling so St. Walter is not alone in this situation. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our parish has experienced a decrease in revenue while still incurring expenses necessary to support our day-to-day operations. To continue funding parish operations over the next fiscal year, the Finance Committee and I have determined it necessary to utilize the To Teach Who Christ Is (TTWCI) savings for parish operating expenses beginning July 1, 2020. While this is a difficult decision, we view it as essential based on the current economic environment and look forward to the prospect of normalized parish operations as we emerge from this challenging period.

Our parish and parishioners are always in my prayers and I continue to say private Mass every day. Specific Mass intentions can be given to us and we will let you know when the Mass will be said even if you cannot be

there to share in prayer with me. Call the rectory office with your Mass intentions and donations can be dropped off or mailed.

This week, the only "Prayer Help" that I wanted to share with you is two new prayers from Pope Francis. As May is Mary's month, these two prayers should be recited at the end of the Rosary. I have included Pope Francis' letter and prayers in their entirety. You may find the other "Prayer Helps" by looking at last week's newsletter.

Please continue to be safe and healthy.

*Peace in the Risen Christ,
Fr. Jim*



May 8, 2020

Dear St. Walter families,

I want to first off thank you for the amazing academic support you are providing your child during this time of eLearning. I know the transition has not been easy for our students and families, but in true Wildcat spirit, we are successfully navigating the remainder of the school year.

At this time, it is with a heavy heart that I convey to you my decision to not return to St. Walter Catholic School as your principal for the coming school year. The decision was not an easy one, and came after countless hours of prayer and reflection. From the moment I arrived, you welcomed me into the Wildcat family and embraced the course I had set out for the school. Over the past four years, we have had to overcome some difficult times. The support and encouragement you showed me during that time was unwavering, but perhaps more importantly demonstrated that when we work together and remain strong, we can achieve anything.

I want you to know how very grateful I am to our faculty and staff. On a daily basis they give their very best to our students providing opportunities to expand their knowledge and become independent critical thinkers. They successfully took on the challenges of new initiatives that I brought into the school, demonstrating their passion and commitment to the students and families of St. Walter School. They represent the qualities and dedication that every principal dreams of having with their faculty and staff, and we are blessed to have them at St. Walter School.

St. Walter School is more than a building filled with educators and students, it is truly a family. I am forever grateful to you for all of the kindness and support you have shown me during my time serving as your principal. I wish you and the entire St. Walter community all the best in the future.

Most sincerely,

Mrs. Sharon O'Toole, Principal



The Holy See

**LETTER OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
TO THE FAITHFUL FOR THE MONTH OF MAY 2020**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The month of May is approaching, a time when the People of God express with particular intensity their love and devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is traditional in this month to pray the Rosary at home within the family. The restrictions of the pandemic have made us come to appreciate all the more this “family” aspect, also from a spiritual point of view.

For this reason, I want to encourage everyone to rediscover the beauty of praying the Rosary at home in the month of May. This can be done either as a group or individually; you can decide according to your own situations, making the most of both opportunities. The key to doing this is always simplicity, and it is easy also on the internet to find good models of prayers to follow.

I am also providing two prayers to Our Lady that you can recite at the end of the Rosary, and that I myself will pray in the month of May, in spiritual union with all of you. I include them with this letter so that they are available to everyone.

Dear brothers and sisters, contemplating the face of Christ with the heart of Mary our Mother will make us even more united as a spiritual family and will help us overcome this time of trial. I keep all of you in my prayers, especially those suffering most greatly, and I ask you, please, to pray for me. I thank you, and with great affection I send you my blessing.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 25 April 2020

Feast of Saint Mark the Evangelist

Pope Francis

First Prayer to Our Lady

O Mary,

You shine continuously on our journey
as a sign of salvation and hope.

We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,
who, at the foot of the cross,
were united with Jesus' suffering,
and persevered in your faith.

"Protectress of the Roman people",
you know our needs,
and we know that you will provide,
so that, as at Cana in Galilee,
joy and celebration may return
after this time of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform ourselves to the will of the Father
and to do what Jesus tells us.

For he took upon himself our suffering,
and burdened himself with our sorrows
to bring us, through the cross,
to the joy of the Resurrection.

Amen.

We fly to your protection,

O Holy Mother of God;

Do not despise our petitions

in our necessities,

but deliver us always

from every danger,

O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.

The second Prayer

“We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God”.

In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our Mother, and seek refuge under your protection.

Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.

Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the Father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.

Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers who are on the frontline of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity and continued health.

Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone.

Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and women engaged in scientific research, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus.

Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.

Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

Beloved Mother, help us realize that we are all members of one great family and to recognize the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely

resume its normal course.

To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O
Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.