

April 14, 2020



St. Walter Parish Newsletter

Issue 3, Vol. I

AN EASTER IN SOLITUDE

Dear Parishioners of St. Walter-

The title of this letter, "An Easter in Solitude," are the words Pope Francis spoke this past Easter Sunday in his homily. I hope all of you were able to enjoy Easter under these unusual circumstances. Many of you have mentioned how you have watched Holy Week either on television or through some other social media outlet. While certainly not the same as being at St. Walter, I hope these Masses for Holy Week offered some comfort and assurance to all of you.

One of the liturgies I enjoyed very much was the Good Friday service from Rome with Pope Francis. Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, OSM., CAP., gave the homily. He quoted a reflection that recently came from a Jewish rabbi who said: "That we have the opportunity to celebrate a very special Paschal Exodus this year. That from the exile of consciousness, it took merely the smallest and most formless element of nature, a virus, to remind us that we are mortal. That military power or technology are not sufficient to save us. As the psalm in the Bible says, 'In his prime, man does not understand he is like the beasts. He perishes just like them.'" How true it is.

But Fr. Cantalamessa moves forward from the sober words of the Rabbi. He says, "We have forgotten about building walls, the virus knows no borders. In an instant, it has broken all the barriers and distinctions of race, nation, religion, wealth and power. We should not revert to that prior time when this moment has passed. As the Holy Father has exhorted us, we should not waste this opportunity. He says, "Let us not allow that so much pain, so many deaths, and so much heroic engagement on the part of health workers to have been in vain. Returning to the way things were is a recession we should fear the most. We should not return to the former way of life like Lazarus, but the new life like Jesus. We need to become more fraternal, more human, more Christian."

Let this be our hope, our light, and guide during these fifty days of Easter. And as we approach Divine Mercy Sunday this weekend, let us reflect on the image of Jesus on the cross with blood and water coming forth from his side. Let us remember that Jesus' suffering washes us clean. On this Divine Mercy Sunday, let us pray with renewed confidence, "Jesus, I trust in you." Be sure to pray the chaplet of Divine Mercy on EWTN every day at 2:00pm.

Please continue to pray for all those who are suffering from this disease, those who have died and will die, those who are in nursing homes, all medical staff and police officers who are on

the front line saving lives and helping people, grocery store workers, and for the many people who are unemployed.

Thank you to those who have continued to contribute to our St. Walter parish family. We are grateful to be remembered during this unusual time, especially for your special Easter donation. Please consider giving online if you are not already. Here at St. Walter, we have two options:

1. Using Our Sunday Visitor which can be accessed through our parish website or directly at www.osvonlinegiving.com/4913
2. Through the Archdiocese's website www.archchicago.org/home and click on the red DONATE button at the top of the home page. Once you reach the Giving section of their website, "Universal Offertory Program" is the first choice

You can make a weekly offertory contribution to our St. Walter parish family while sheltering-in-place and keep our vital ministries going. We ask that you prayerfully consider maintaining your regular weekly donation level. If you prefer to make an offertory donation through cash or check, you mail them or drop them in the Rectory mail slot.

Once again, I wish to express my thanks to those who have called me and to those I have had a chance to call to see how we are all doing through this unprecedented time. Please check our "Prayer Helps" that include a variety of prayers and reflections that can bring us closer to God and to us as the parish family of St. Walter.

*Peace in the Risen Christ,
Fr. Jim*

PS. If you would like a copy of the Easter edition of "The Word Among Us," please call me at (773) 779-1515 to make arrangements to pick it up at the rectory. Please hold on to your Rice Bowls. They will be collected once we return to public Masses. Do not put them through the mail slot at the rectory. Thank you for your consideration!

Prayer Helps

- Sunday Mass at 9:30am on channel 9 and at 8:00am and 11:00am (repeat) on EWTN
- The Prayer Receiving Christ Spiritually (see below)

Since all of us are unable to receive holy communion and desire it so much, one of the great saints of the church, St. Alphonsus Liguori, offers this prayer of spiritual communion:

**My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most blessed sacrament.
I love you above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you are already there, and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you.
Amen.**

- The Prayer During an Epidemic (click link on home page)
- One of our parishioners, Milton Wright, modified and shared this prayer with us.
We thought it would be good to share it with you as well. (see below)

God of all mercies, grant:
To the St. Walters family, safety and good health;
To those afflicted with COVID-19, swift healing;
To the frightened, courage;
To the dying, comfort;
To the dead, eternal life;
To health-care providers, strength and stamina;
To our leaders, wisdom and compassion;
To our nation, unity of purpose;
To the Church, the grace to serve the suffering selflessly;
To all believers, strong faith in Your presence;
To the whole human family, unity of heart; and
To us, your servants, the reward of knowing that we are doing Your will
when we spend ourselves in loving service of others.

- A reminder about Cardinal Cupich's call to common prayer and the ringing of church bells five times a day.

The prayers and intentions for each hour of prayer are below:

9:00 a.m. - Prayer for those infected with the virus and all who are ill

Lord, place your healing hand on those who suffer illness. Bring them to full health and ease their anxious hearts. May our prayer and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary encourage them that they are not alone. We ask this in Jesus' Name. AMEN

12:00 p.m. - Prayer for health care workers and those attending to the sick

Lord, we are ennobled by those who put their lives at risk in caring for the sick. Keep them safe and embolden them when they are weary. We ask this in Jesus' Name. AMEN

3:00 p.m. - Prayer for first responders and essential workers

Lord, we pray for those who run to danger to keep us safe and those who serve the common good. Embrace them with your mantle of protection and comfort the fears of their families. We ask this in Jesus' Name. AMEN

6:00 p.m. - Prayer for people of every nation and their leaders

Lord, the pandemic opens our eyes to see each other as brothers and sisters in one human family. We pray for people of every nation and their leaders, asking that they be inspired to seek the good of all and quell the voices of division. We ask this in Jesus' Name. AMEN

9:00 p.m. - Prayer for those who have died today

Lord, we grieve the passing of our sisters and brothers who have died this day. We commend them to your tender mercy, confident that nothing, not even death, will separate us from your love. We ask this in Jesus' Name. AMEN

(Excerpt from announcement from Cardinal Cupich on March 20, 2020)

- The booklet, "[The Word Among Us.](#)" For those who wish to continue daily reflections for Easter, please call the rectory at (773) 779-1515 to make arrangements for pick up.