

April 22, 2020



St. Walter Parish Newsletter

Issue 4, Vol. I

DIVINE MERCY DURING THE EASTER SEASON AND THE PANDEMIC

Dear Parishioners of St. Walter-

The May issue of "The Priest" had as their cover story the title "Ministry in a Time of Pandemic." But what struck me even more was the photograph they chose. It is a recent familiar scene we priests see whenever we celebrate Mass now: seemingly endless rows of empty benches. While it is different watching Mass on a screen, all of us appreciate it. But it is also very different celebrating Mass with no one else praying with you. It is truly a challenging reminder of the new reality that affects our faith every Sunday. And yet surveys show that not only are we praying more often, as many of you have already told me, but there are even more people beginning to pray.

Take, for example, last Sunday, Divine Mercy Sunday. It should not be regarded as a separate feast, but as a spiritual catalyst to guide us through the entire fifty days of Easter and the pandemic. What does Divine Mercy Sunday teach us? Several things, but first and foremost, it teaches us to trust. This is what God wanted from St. Faustina during those difficult years that led up to World War II. He wants us to trust in His divine mercy, His providential care, and His unending good for us all. The second request God has for us is to persevere in prayer. It is good to hear that so many of you are praying more often and as a family. And finally, we need to look for creative ways to put into the forefront the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. Yes, these are challenging times during the pandemic, but look at how well we have already adapted to so many things during this time. Let us take to heart the positive and uplifting words from the Book of Lamentations, "God's mercies are renewed each morning." (3:23)

As we continue to pray for so many who are directly affected by the pandemic, let us remember those who are most vulnerable, especially those in nursing homes and jails.

Please use the following link: www.usml.edu/maycrowning to sign up for the Virtual May Crowning to be streamed live from Mundelein Seminary on Sunday, May 3rd at 1:00pm.

Missing all of you, and awaiting the day when we can reunite together in church,

*Peace in the Risen Christ,
Fr. Jim*

PS. 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.