

Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord + April 12, 2020

Readings: Acts 10:34a, 37-43 +Colossians 3:1-4 +John 20:1-9

Around & About Ste Rose...

Dear Parishioners,

First Some News!

Peter Ferland has been the custodian in the parish for nearly 20 twenty years. On April 18th Peter will celebrate his 71st birthday – Congratulations! As Peter turns 71 years old, we announce his retirement. Peter’s last day is April 17th. The parish thanks Peter for his nearly 20 years of service and we wish him a long and happy retirement. Peter’s mom is advanced in years and is in declining health. We pray that time spent with his mother is full of joy and service to her needs. May God bless you Peter! Again, all of us at Ste. Rose de Lima Parish wish you a long and happy retirement!

Mark Morin, who presently serves as the custodian at St. Joan of Arc School will succeed Peter as church custodian. Mark will be in a part-time position as custodian while maintaining his full-time position at SJA School. His position will be effective Monday, April 20, 2020. *Welcome aboard!*

Easter Sunday Mass was recorded for you to watch from inside our beautiful Ste. Rose de Lima Church! It can be accessed through the parish website, Facebook, and You Tube. I am so grateful to so many who made this “taping” of Easter Sunday Mass possible. You will be able to view the Mass as often as you like with the ability to “fast-forward” the sermon! We are hopeful to tape weekly Sunday Mass from our church until the time of social isolation is ended. You will notice that the church is fully decorated with the “glory of Easter Joy!” How I wish you could have been able to see it for yourselves! To all who have contributed to the Easter Flower Fund – thank you!

Financial News Last week the parish was able to deposit a total of \$13,120.00 ~~ thank you so much! Many parishioners have contributed through the USPS, dropping off contributions at the Pastoral Center, and others on-line through the diocesan website. Your continued financial support throughout this pandemic is edifying! *Merci Beaucoup!*

And finally,

Easter 2020 will long be remembered as the Easter of COVID 19. With a global pandemic in full force, we watch the death toll rise daily. The media has kept us informed with the important facts. However, one fact that is mentioned only occasionally, is how many have recovered from the COVID 19 virus. For the recovery of so many – we are grateful. The temptation though, is to become relaxed with the concept of “social distancing.” The primary method of assisting ER personnel and all first responders is to maintain a sense of vigilance with social distancing and isolation. It comes right down to this: the more vigilant we are the sooner the virus will peak and begin to recede thereby saving thousands of lives. Let us do our part of social awareness by only going out for what is truly essential. The Diocese of Springfield has been especially criticized by many “fundamental” Catholics as being too restrictive in its response to COVID 19. Remember that clergy are human too! Many of the clergy in our diocese are over the age of 60. Many clergy have underlying health issues as well. As you may know, 8 priests in the Archdiocese of Boston contracted COVID 19. Directives from the Governor’s Office are in a state of flux. Updates from the Governor’s Office need to be seriously considered in response to what is “safe” to do. I believe that Bishop Rozanski’s leadership has been “on target” no matter what his critics may say. There is a short-term versus long-term strategy: short-term isolation versus long-term good health for all. Which would you prefer? I choose long-term health for everyone.

With all of that said, it is Easter and a time to reflect on its meaning: The Spirit of the Risen Christ is upon each of us. Recall the Gospel of St. John:” On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.” When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. Those first apostles experienced fear for their very lives. Living behind locked doors, the Risen Christ burst through the locked doors of fear and breathed upon them a new hope. I believe, even in our weeks of isolation, fearful for our very lives, the Risen Christ bursts through our “locked doors” and breathes on us Easter Joy and Easter Peace. We are the only ones that can allow fear to dominate our lives. As believers, we choose to trust in the love and mercy of our God – even in this time of pandemic. Even in the present experience of sacrament-less times, is not God’s strength

greater than our weakness? Can God redeem us because of God's great mercy? To my way of thinking the answer is a resounding "YES!" Easter 2020 is a challenging spiritual reality. Remember, it is not so much what we can do for God, it is about what our God can accomplish in us. May Easter 2020 enable each of us to trust in its very message: Christ has died! Christ is Risen! Christ will come again! Alleluia! Alleluia!

May you and your family experience a Blessed Easter Season! Perhaps by Pentecost Sunday (50 days after Easter) we will once again be with each other at the Eucharistic Table!

With Easter Love & Peace,

Fr. Bill