



SAINT ANDREW'S PARISH

March 19, 2020

Dear Friends,

This is certainly not the Lent we had anticipated and as we prepare for the great Christian feast days of Holy Week, I thought it was time that, as your pastor, I assure you of our prayers and support and keep you up to date on what is happening in the parish.

It was not a big surprise as we began the week that Bishop Crosby, on the advice of government and public health professionals, took the radical step to declare that no public celebrations of the Mass or any other liturgical event or parish based program take place until further notice. We have cancelled upcoming events in the parish including the Marriage Preparation Program scheduled for the last weekend of this month and the Parish Mission and retreat which was to begin on Palm Sunday weekend.

As we wait for events to unfold over the next few weeks, please note the following:

1. For the next little while, St. Andrews Church is closed even for a brief visit. However, we are still here, a very prominent symbol of faith that has comforted worried and anxious parishioners in times of war and during the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1918. He who created us and called us by name is still present and waits with us, worries with us and will not leave us alone. On Monday as I was walking around the church placing signs on the doors, it was very quiet, no one on any street for ages. The late afternoon sun made the building even more beautiful and from the outside, the images on the south windows were clearly visible. I was comforted knowing that the prayers of countless generations have made this holy ground and holds us up during these days. I came home with the words of Julian of Norwich ringing in my ears "and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well."
2. Each day during this crisis, Fr. Felix, Deacon Richard and I will gather for Mass and pray for you, for our parishioners wherever they may be, and our community. Daily Mass is available on Salt and Light TV and each day during the crisis, Pope Francis morning Mass is streamed from the Casa Santa Marta. **We have worked on making a recording of Mass for Sunday and it will be posted on our parish website late each Saturday evening.** www.standrewoakville.com As of writing, Bishop Crosby and the staff at the Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King are negotiating with CHCH TV for Mass to be broadcast on Sunday morning. During this time, we give thanks for all of the blessings we have received and we pray that those things that we need to remain healthy will be available to us. We pray also for the courage of healthcare and public health professionals and for those who are ill, in quarantine or are self-isolating. We will get through this. Every day the bells in the church tower ring out and remind us that very soon, you will be back with us to sing and pray again at the Lord's table.

3. The parish office is closed. Sharon will be in as we need her. Please leave a message if you need anything and check our website for updates: www.standrewoakville.com Gerry will continue to keep the buildings clean and in tip-top shape. He is also working a reduced schedule. If you have any questions or need any pastoral assistance, the best way to get a quick response is by email con@standrewoakville.com or by message at **289-795-5140**. Oakville Hospital, Ian Andreson Hospice and each nursing home and retirement home in Oakville have new procedures for visits from outside the institution. Please email us or call if you need pastoral care for a loved one.
4. For information on Holy Week and Easter, please check our parish website. The bulletin is also posted each week on our website. Printed copies of the bulletin will be available in the mailbox by the office door.
5. Plans for children celebrating First Communion, Reconciliation and Confirmation depend on what happens in the next few weeks. Lynette will keep parents informed through email and on our website. In the meantime, please continue the preparation and pray together often.
6. Finally, all of us can take some time to pray at home. The rosary is a beautiful, meditative prayer that can draw us deeper into the events of Holy Week and Easter. Perhaps your children or grandchildren have been learning (and practicing) Christian Meditation in school. Have them teach you. There are some great resources online for daily prayer; www.pray-as-you-go.org is one, the www.ireviary.com and www.laudate.com both have the daily readings for Mass and the Breviary (the Daily Prayer of the Church). We have attached a beautiful collection of prayers for set hours during each day. The scriptures are always a source of good nourishment for the soul and in these times the Psalms especially can be of great comfort.

Felix and I are doing well. We celebrated Saint Patrick's Day with a fine feast of cabbage, ham and buttery potatoes. We broke the Lenten fast (Irish people can do that for the day only) with a nice Italian wine and whispered prayers for the people there and for relief from their suffering. We have lots of books that have piled up and I have a long list of movies to catch up on. Living so close to the lake we get to walk often. Please feel free to park in the parking lot and enjoy the walk as well. There is something very soothing in the sound of the waves moving with the wind and water lapping on the shore. Be well and we look forward to welcoming you with great joy very soon.

Sincerely,



Fr. Con O'Mahony

Call to Prayer during the day.

Morning: 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

Noon: 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

Afternoon: 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

Evening: 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

Night: 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