

March 24, 2020

Wednesday Update #2

Dear Fellow Parishioners:

This is our second update to our St. Helen parish family on keeping you advised of what we are doing at the parish office during this pandemic. We have of course initiated all of the directives issued by the Diocese Office and the suggestions made by civil and medical authorities. Our present initiatives are noted below:

1. When I first wrote this update, I included this paragraph last. Many of the updates we are all receiving now, thank you for your support, then tell you of the things that are happening and then.....ask for money. I decided to do otherwise. Please send your financial support to St. Helen. With no weekend masses many who contribute each week are not doing so. Many have sent in their donations and it has been very helpful. Furthermore, we have seen an increase in our online givers, Faith Direct (can be initiated through St. Helen web site). This is much appreciated as it is secure, safe and efficient means of financially supporting the parish. No one needs to count the money nor take a deposit to the bank, even our records are automatically updated. We are fortunate to have some cushion at present, but your support is not only a part of all of our Lenten sacrifice but also critical to our sustaining our ability to serve each other's needs.
2. Though the plea above is first, we all know that our number one priority is serving one another and the most powerful means of that is not money but prayer. Please be assured that all of the clergy and staff are praying diligently for you and your families. We are so blessed to have so many means of communicating our prayers and sharing them through social media.
3. Private masses are being said by our priests on behalf of all of us in the parish and for the intentions of each respective day. Anointing of the Sick is being handled as requested, though many medical facilities have restricted entrance to all non-medical personnel. Confessions at present are being heard by appointment.
4. We are working to daily add audio and visual features on the St. Helen web site, Facebook, and St. Helen App. Included thus far are daily reflections on Lent, messages from Fr. Nelson, Deacon Joe and Kendel Jordan our Youth Minister. Today we live streamed a mass on YouTube but experienced sound issues which have since been corrected. We plan to live stream the mass this Sunday, the Fifth Sunday in Lent at 9:00am. Within the next few days, we will be adding presentations of the Stations of the Cross in English and Spanish, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from our chapel, and additional messages from the St. Helen clergy and fellow parishioners.
5. Our staff is doing an amazing job at a time when no one is quite sure of correct protocol. The St. Helen main office staff is answering the office phone during all normal office hours, Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm. Admittance to the office is restricted to appointments only. Our emergency line remains open for the off hours. The welfare of our staff is of utmost importance. We are encouraging more working from home, shortened and varied hours. We are continuing to review this situation and are hopeful to effectively maintain our current situation.
6. St. Helen Outreach office is not open during its regular hours. Calls for non-food assistance are being handled one-on-one by phone. Due to a shortage of food, we are planning on opening the

office on each Wednesday only for food distribution. Our office at the United Against Poverty facility is open and functioning on an intermittent basis at this time.

The office phone is 772-567-5129. If you have a need, question, or concern, please call us. This is your parish and we are all here to serve God by serving one another.

Today is the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord. We pray in the way our Lord told us in the Lord's Prayer and in many other ways. There is no better, stronger more effective or more assured means of our prayers being answered than through and with the intercession of our Blessed Mother with the Holy Spirit. There is an endless amount of unknown and doubt concerning issues of the virus, there is NO DOUBT regarding the Blessed Virgin Mary. I include here the Memorare Prayer:

REMEMBER, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly to thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to thee do I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

Your Brother in Christ,

Deacon dave