

NOTES FROM FATHER MIKE

July 19, 2020

- ✱ I hope everyone is staying well and keeping safe! We are encouraged by the Word of God this week to be patient, not an easy thing right now! As Jesus talks about in his parables, the growth of the Kingdom of God takes time. Planting seeds, baking bread, or building a relationship (with the Lord or anyone else!) are all things that require patience and persistence. So as the epidemic persists, we try to be patient – with the Lord, with other people, and with ourselves!
- ✱ Many people are still uncomfortable with the idea of attending Mass, which is completely understandable! This is especially true (and necessary) for those who are most vulnerable: “senior” citizens, folks with chronic health conditions, and of course, anyone who is not well! I want to be clear: No one HAS to attend Mass during the epidemic! There is a dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass until further notice (meaning, it’s not a sin!); Many folks watch and pray the Mass on TV or on their computers. We “live stream” the Mass every Saturday at 4:00 and have it available to watch anytime as a recording. I did read an interesting article about the decision to attend Mass. You may want to check out this article by Father Brendan Gottschall, [“Should You Attend Mass in a Pandemic?”](#) (Just click on the title of the article!) But whether you attend Mass or not, it’s important for us to pray together as a community, even if we’re not all in the same place at the same time! So, until the day when we are together again, let us pray!
- ✱ I met with the leaders of the Council of Catholic Women last week where we determined that it would not be a good idea to try to put on the “Happy Holly-Days Bazaar” this year. This was to have been the 43rd annual Bazaar, but the corona epidemic simply makes it impossible to plan, prepare for, or even host the event this year. It’s sad not to be able to have this significant event, and it will be a loss for our parish and the community. We plan to be back next year, though! Thank you all of the people who have helped put the Bazaar together every year, especially the women of the CCW.
- ✱ Thanks to the many parishioners who have taken time to respond to the parish census update mailing. Some quick numbers: When we first mailed the update forms back in May, they were sent to all of the families and households that are registered in the parish. There were 1,250 households! By way of mail, fax, email, and telephone, we have received responses from 397 families! I needed a calculator to determine that is around 32 percent! That’s not even a third! So we went through the list and determined that there were a good number of people that had had no contact with the parish (as far as we knew) for over seven years. We moved most of these folks to an “inactive” status. If we hear from them for any reason, we’ll be happy to “reactivate” them. As for the rest of you: Come on, please! We are going to resend the update form to all of those who have not yet responded (although we will contact some by phone, especially if you are fairly active in the parish and simply haven’t responded for some reason! You can avoid this terrible fate by getting your form back to us this week! Again, thank you to everyone who has responded already! We look forward to hearing from the rest of you soon!

Peace in Christ, Fr. Mike