

FROM THE CHAPLAINCY



Dear Woodrose Parents

It has been more than two weeks since the enhanced quarantine period that forced all of us to stay home to stop the spread of and avoid being infected by the Covid-19 virus. This is the first time in our life that we are experiencing a global pandemic with news from all over the world that may cause us to shudder in fear. We are afraid for ourselves, for our families and for our society at large. For most of you, you can only access the online celebration of the Holy Mass and Eucharistic adoration. These are difficult times whose end nobody could foresee, though we continue praying together with Pope Francis and the whole Christian community to our Father God to put an end to the pain and suffering that many people are going through. We pray for the people “tasked to find the cures for this disease”(1) and for the protection of the health workers who continue to care for those afflicted.

In a few days it will be Holy Week. The whole Church will commemorate the Paschal Mystery that brought about our redemption. It will be a very unusual Holy Week for all of us because there will only be an online participation in the Holy Week services. Let us offer to God Our Lord all of the limitations of our quarantine condition.

Allow me to share with you two things that could be of help during these times. The first is the short letter of the Prelate of Opus Dei written on April 1. I hope that it could help us see what is going on now from the perspective of the Cross of Christ. The second is a prayer composed by one of my students in San Carlos Seminary that could be helpful when you attend the online Mass and pray before the online Blessed Sacrament.

(1) Revised Oratio Imperata (Against the Spread of the Coronavirus disease)

Letter from the Prelate (1 April 2020)

My dear children may Jesus watch over my daughters and sons for me!

The Paschal Triduum is drawing near, when the liturgy will invite us to contemplate these great mysteries of God's love for us. In the current time of suffering all over the world due to the pandemic, let us look frequently at Christ Crucified. Let us see in the Holy Cross, as the Pope helped us to consider this past March 27, the anchor of salvation that keeps us from shipwreck. From there Jesus illumines the meaning of suffering and even helps us to discover that, with his grace, we are able not to lose our joy. And what is more, many times we are able to recover it: *Gaudium in Cruce!*

At this time we have experienced how human solidarity, above all when it is informed by charity, pours itself out in generous service to others: beside the bed of a sick person, in a line at the supermarket, in caring for one's own family, which is frequently isolated in a few square meters... Let us pray a lot for the people who are dying, for the sick—including faithful of the Work—and for their families. Let us address our grateful prayer to our Lord for the countless persons who are continuing to provide these

and many other indispensable acts of service. They are a witness to the fact that the soul of any society is the spirit of service.

We can't allow anxiety or fear to rob us of our peace, because, as Saint Paul wrote, Christ is our peace! (cf. *Eph 2:14*). In the circumstances of greater or lesser difficulty in which we find ourselves, let us place our trust in God's love for each of us: He knows what is best and never abandons anyone. As Saint Josemaria reminded us, "What great trust, peace and optimism you will find, in the midst of difficulties, from realizing you are children of a Father who knows everything and can do everything" (*Letter*, 9 January 1959). With our trust placed above all in God—and not in our own strength—each of us can offer our talents to joyfully assist others, which will always be compatible with suffering and tears.

I invite you to take advantage of the opportunities that technology offers to follow the Holy Week services united to the Pope. During the upcoming days I will also send you, via the website, some reflections about the mysteries we will be celebrating, so that we can all pray together and be more closely united. Your Father blesses you with all his affection,



Rome, 1 April 2020

The Awkward Prayer

by John Rhey Espinoza

How awkward it is Lord, to praise your Sacramental Body through this phone screen.

How awkward it is Lord to gaze upon you in this live feed.

How awkward it is Lord to talk to you virtually.

But I know it is you, listening to my pleading, and so I talk anyway.

But I know it is your Body, and so I gaze anyway.

But I believe you are Sacramentally present on the other side of this virtual separation between us. And so I praise you even more.

Despite of this "awkwardness" between us, you remained the same, but even more close to me.

Despite of this "virtual space" where we meet, I felt your presence surrounding me.

Despite of this "video chat" situation we have, you fill me with your silence as you listened to me.

You were never far from me, Eucharistic Lord. You were never far from us.

May in this "awkwardness and virtuality" our heart will blaze so that we may fall in love with you even more when we finally meet again Sacramentally, face to face.

Amen.

