

UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN

Dear Parishioners,

I want to share some thoughts about where we are and where we are going. We all long to be together to celebrate the Holy Eucharist as a community. While the externals of liturgical celebration are not presently an option, there is much to learn from our present experience.

Jesus reminds the Samaritan women that a time is coming when we will not worship on this mountain or in this place, but true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. While ritual is important to our faith experience, it can sometimes be just an external sign without a personal spiritual component.

Jesus does not ask us to adore him, he calls us to follow him, “that where I am, my servant will be also, and you will do even greater things.” I wish there were as much concern about following Jesus at his word, by living according to the Gospel, as there is about receiving the sacred host.

The word of God given to us through Jesus is a sword that cuts through our lives and is at all time counter cultural. The word of God challenges our society and calls us to be Eucharist, bread that is broken, not living by the sword, forgiving those who hurt us, clothing the naked, welcoming the stranger, and in truth, being Jesus amidst a world that chooses power rather than love, revenge rather than mercy, and death rather than life.

When we receive Holy Communion, we are making a radical commitment to see who we are, and to behold what we are called to become. Thus, we cannot receive the host without also accepting the call to discipleship. We need to be more concerned about this than worrying about how many people we can put into church or about having Mass in the parking lot.

The celebration of Holy Eucharist must be given the respect that it deserves. This will be our concern when we are able to open again. We can not give in to novelty, gimmicks or anything else that would diminish reverence and respect due to the real presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

We are being given a unique opportunity to reflect on the meaning of our lives, our values, and our faith. If we are living as a Eucharistic people, then we are not being deprived of the presence of Jesus. The outward sign of this reality we will soon be celebrating. When we once again gather, we

will give expression to our discipleship, and our commitment to Jesus, the living bread that has come down from heaven, that gives life to all the world.

When we are ready to open, we will have some restrictions to numbers, wearing masks, and doing everything we can to keep us safe. When these regulations are given to me by the diocese, then we will decide how we will implement them here at St. Peters. In the meantime, believe that your heavenly Father knows what you need, and will provide for you.

I want to thank all those who are working to keep us safe. I pray that we continue to use common sense, good judgment, and act responsibly. We are doing all we can to live through this time of pandemic, in a spirit of love and caring for others. Your support for Msgr. and myself is very much appreciated. I assure you we are doing all we can to provide for the needs of our parish, through prayer, outreach and service. We are here for you.

May God continue to bless the good work he has begun in us and see it to completion.

Father Gagne