

Dear Parishioners,

I write you today, March 19, on the feast of St. Joseph. Bishop Deshotel has declared this next year to be dedicated in a special way to St. Joseph. Please find [here a copy of the Bishop's Pastoral Letter](#), which was to be released this coming weekend.

In this time of coronavirus, I know that many of you are facing hardships – physical, social, emotional, financial, and spiritual. So many things have changed so quickly, it is of little wonder that we are all feeling uncertainty, doubt, and worry.

Since my arrival at St Patrick's, I've said many times and in many different ways that we have to learn to go to our Lord in prayer, drawing back from the noise of the world, and in silence learn of His goodness and mighty power. Such a time as this only reinforces the urgency and necessity of that message.

As I've come to know you, the parishioners of St. Patrick's, I've seen that you are a level-headed lot, with abundant good sense. So I know you'll be prudent and careful, following the prescribed guidelines. You'll be keeping informed of things, I know. But I want to warn you about overdoing it. Too much news, too much social media will rob you of your peace. There's no need to follow every moment of every news story. The twenty-four hour news cycle is its own whirlwind that by its nature makes every tidbit of information seem life-alteringly important. Step out of the whirlwind. Find your information from reliable, official sources. Check once or twice a day, no more. Do fun things to relax, to knock back the worry. Tackle those little household tasks you've been putting off. Make time to laugh and do delightful things. The Lord is pleased when His children, trusting in Him, find delight in difficult times.

I know many of you will feel deeply the loss of gathering together to celebrate the Eucharist in these coming days and weeks, and especially the reception of our Lord in Holy Communion. You may remember that from time to time I have mentioned the practice of making a spiritual communion. Now is the time for us to have recourse to this form of Eucharistic devotion. Remember, you can "turn toward the tabernacle" and receive Jesus in your heart from anywhere you might happen to be, at any time, day or night. ([One spiritual communion prayer](#)).

It is also a time for us to give thanks to God for "spoiling" us here in Acadiana with such easy and frequent access to the sacraments. Now we can unite ourselves in solidarity with those Catholics throughout the world who live in places where circumstances do not permit such easy access to the sacraments. Sometimes they must go weeks or months before a priest can come to them to hear their confessions, to unite them in matrimony, to bring them the holy Eucharist. In this absence, they learn to deepen their hunger for holiness; they keep the faith; they trudge on,

learning to trust ever more in the Lord, in His divine providence. How can we not do the same?

While our new website is currently being built, St. Patrick's still has a simple website that Fr. Keith had set up (stpat.org), which will be updated as necessary. Please check the website from time to time. If you wish, there is the possibility of getting email notifications for new posts. See the bottom of the right hand column, under the heading "Connect via email".

As we don't have the email address for every parishioner of St. Patrick's (mostly for those who are volunteers or ministers, for scheduling purposes), I invite you to forward this email to other St. Patrick folks who may wish to receive it. If they then respond to my email address, I can add them in for future communications.

Lastly, but above all, know of my prayers and love for each of you. I really look forward to seeing you all again, and please God, soon. Until then, please do not hesitate to contact me or Monica at the parish if you need anything. We plan to maintain office hours as normal.

Yours,

Fr. Guillory

P.S. By the way, not everything is grinding to a halt. Work on our Eucharistic chapel in the parish hall is proceeding very well. I think everyone will be delighted by how well it will turn out!