



Dear Parishioners,

This weekend we celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Easter and the first weekend of May. The month of May is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. An old custom that I remember from my childhood is creating a "May Altar" in the home. A statue or image of the Virgin Mary is placed in a prominent place, and flowers from the garden or backyard are placed before it. In these days of confinement to our homes, having a May Altar where the members of the household gather to pray the Rosary or other devotions is a good idea. Lilacs and other spring flowers will make a lovely addition and bring some beauty into the home.

This first weekend in May would have been the time for First Holy Communion, May Crowning, and the Bishop's Annual Appeal. However, due to the circumstances, none of those events will be happening this weekend. Furthermore, I can't tell you at this time when they may be rescheduled. So much is uncertain – not only for St. Andrew Parish but for all of us. We are all anxious to return to normal and to do all those things that we haven't been able to do for a while.

But will things ever be "normal" again? And when might that be? This past week, Governor DeWine announced the beginning of the reopening process here in Ohio, starting May 1. Some offices and businesses are permitted to reopen. The Bishops of Ohio have extended the moratorium on public Masses through **the weekend of May 30-31**. It is hoped that beginning that weekend – known as the Solemnity of Pentecost – we may begin to once again have public Masses in church. Much planning will need to take place before then to make certain that our churches can fulfill all the requirements to ensure the safety and health of those who will be coming to church for Mass. I will share more information about this in the coming weeks.

Please remember that the priests of St. Andrew are permitted to offer the sacrament of reconciliation by appointment only. Should you need this sacrament, you may request an appointment by calling and leaving a message on my voicemail at (614) 451 -4290 extension 101. You may remain anonymous. Once an appointment date and time is set, the sacrament takes place in the main vestibule of the church, accessed through the main doors, which will be open. Face covering must be worn, a social distance of 6 feet maintained, and 5 minutes is allowed for confession, penance, and absolution.

In the Gospel for this Sunday, Jesus tells us that he is Shepherd of the sheep, and as a shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out, so his sheep follow him because they recognize his voice. I know that, even in this time of isolation and uncertainty, the voice of Jesus our Shepherd can still be heard as he calls each of us to follow him.

May God bless you all, protect you, and keep you safe.

Your Pastor,
Msgr. Stephan Moloney