



January 21, 2021

Dear Parishioners,

I am happy to tell you that I recently received the first dose of the COVID 19 vaccine! I was surprised when I was informed on Friday, Jan. 15, that OhioHealth was encouraging those priests who may be called upon to administer sacraments to hospital patients to receive the vaccine. So, I quickly arranged to be vaccinated, and that took place last Saturday at Marion General Hospital. I will get the second dose on February 5. I must say that receiving the vaccine was a "shot in the arm" in more than one way. It renewed my hope that someday in the not-too-distant future things may actually return to some semblance of normal. It reassured me that the pandemic will eventually pass, and the day will come when we can all gather together without fear in church again as the people of God. And yet I also realized how lucky I am to have received the vaccine so early in the rollout.

I know we still have a long way to go before they return to normal. I hope that in the meantime, we do not become any less vigilant in our efforts to limit the spread of the virus and to protect ourselves and others from it. And I hope that we do not become less united as a people who are "all in this together." We must continue to support and care for one another until everyone who wants to receive the vaccine has done so. And we must not forget those who have succumbed to the virus, and those who mourn, those who suffer from illness or the lingering effects of the virus, and those who care for them, especially front-line health care workers. Nor can we forget those whose lives are disrupted or are enduring economic hardship, loss of employment or other losses.

Several parishioners have mentioned to me that they either have received or will soon be receiving the vaccine. I sincerely hope that all of you will receive the vaccine when you are able to do so. Pope Francis and Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI both were recently vaccinated at the Vatican. Pope Francis also urged everyone to receive the vaccine when it is available, saying "I believe everyone should receive the vaccine; it is an ethical option because your health, your life is at stake." So that is also my hope that you will receive the vaccine when it is your turn to do so. I hope that it will be a "shot in the arm" for you too!

Your Pastor,
Msgr. Stephan Moloney