

March 25, 2020

My Dear Friends in Christ,

“What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?” “No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us.” Romans 8:35, 37

The current restrictions that have been imposed by our Bishop and government leaders have greatly affected our lives – sacramentally and materially. We are living in a time of uncertainty, anxiety, and possibly even fear. For a while we cannot come together as a community to celebrate the Eucharist and receive our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament which is the source and summit of our Catholic life. We seem to be “separated” from the love of Christ. And in a real way we are. But, we can use this time of physical separation to reflect on how we can grow deeper in our love for Christ. And isn’t that what our time in Lent is all about?

So what can we do? First of all we pray. We pray more and with more intensity. Use your Bible and pray using Lectio Divina (Divine Reading). You take a short section of the Gospel, perhaps the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday, and read it slowly, prayerfully, and carefully. Read it over several times and then find one phrase or idea that stands out for you. Then meditate on it, again, slowly and carefully. Then turn your reflection into a prayer – speak to God from your heart. Finally, quietly listen for a response from our Lord. It may come as an insight or a feeling but you must be still to hear it. The Bible will come alive for you in this way.

Pray the Rosary, slowly and more meditatively. Pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. Use your own favorite devotions with more love. Pray together as a family.

Another thing we can do is to make a Spiritual Communion which is the practice of desiring Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist for those times like now when we cannot receive Him physically in Communion. *“My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.”* You can say this prayer often during the day.

I know that many of you are able to navigate the internet which is something I am not really good at doing. There are many wonderful sites you can visit to stay connected with the Faith. For instance, you can view the Mass on our Diocesan website, EWTN, Word on Fire, and others. The online Magnificat is being offered free during this time and is a wonderful source of Mass prayers, readings, and articles.

“What will separate us from the love of Christ?” Nothing. “No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:37-39

With love in Christ,

Fr. Timothy Campoli