

Dear Parishioners of St. Lawrence,

As Pastor, it is my duty to offer you hope! And I HOPE that you are all safe and healthy and well!

I share in your frustration over the restrictions imposed on us by our federal and local authorities, but it is so essential for the well-being all of us that we adhere to these rules in order that lives may be saved and that Covid-19 may be a thing of the past. We live in an age of instant gratification and patience has become something lost on us as a technologically-advanced society. Yes, this is a time of prohibition and we are left with not choice other than playing the "waiting game".

Back to my message of HOPE - God loves us doesn't He? He loves us with a perfect love. He proved that, after all, by sacrificing His only begotten Son, the Second Person of The Most Holy Trinity for our benefit. Interesting, you know, "they" refer to Our Blessed Lord's Passion and Death as "Good Friday" ... what was good about allowing Innocence Incarnate to suffer and die as He did? Well, in retrospect, we now know why - it was good because through this sacrifice, we were redeemed and saved from our sins - the sins mankind had inherited through the original fault of Adam and Eve. We know that, and we accept that and we celebrate that as believers in the Christian Faith! And for whatever reason, He has allowed this horrific Corona Virus to hit us in ways we never thought imaginable. HOWEVER, as a man of hope and as a Priest of God, I remain absolutely certain that He will raise up doctors and scientists to find a vaccination for this terrible pandemic!

To shift gears for a brief moment: one of the hot-button issues confronting our world today is climate change/global warming. Is it a conspiracy? I'm not a scientist, so I don't know, but it's quite telling that the very first encyclical written by our current Holy Father, Pope Francis was just on that very topic. If this matter is important to him, then it should be important to us all. According to the Good Book of Genesis, God made us stewards of His creation of planet earth, and we must live up to this divine-given mandate, right? (and this was well before there were such things as U.S. democrats and republicans) Please, please, please note that I am not using this email to promote a political agenda, because to do so would be inappropriate, unlawful and utterly reprehensible. Yet the truth of the matter remains that we are destroying our environment with all kinds of bad gases and toxins and chemicals and so forth (nobody can deny as much). Now, as a Priest of Christ Jesus, am I worried? Sure, of course, but I'm not overwhelmed by worry for the sole belief that in time, God will inspire scientists to develop innovative and awe-inspiring ways of saving the ecology of our beautiful planet and that the reversal of climate change/global warming will save our world. Of this, I have no doubt whatsoever! Why? Because, like all of you, I am a person of faith and hope! While there are certain agencies bringing harm to planet earth, others will be placed on earth to fix it. According to Luke 5:10, Jesus said, "Be not afraid"!

Be not afraid my dear friends! God has already inspired brilliant researchers to find a vaccine for the Corona Virus - and in time, we will celebrate the victory of this discovery and carry on with our lives as we

did before. Have faith and have hope, my friends! Courage! While we rightfully live with the concern of how this evil virus affects humanity, just think back to the early Apostles who likewise worried over the death of Jesus. It was devastating to them, as this virus is to us! Many will suffer and unfortunately, many will die (just like Christ) - but for those of us who believe in the Resurrection of the dead and life everlasting, we will prevail, we will overcome and once we all die (an inevitable reality for ALL of us), we will understand why God allowed our world to suffer the consequences of Covid-19.

Again, as stated in a previous message, suffering ONLY makes sense of the light of Christ's Cross. I don't have an answer or an explanation for any of this, believe me. But in time, whether it's in this life or the next, we'll all have the answer! And that's a guarantee!

Be not afraid - keep the faith and continue to cultivate the theological virtue of hope!

God bless you!

Love,

~Fr. Eric