

HOLY TRINITY PARISH
March 17, 2020

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

Today is St. Patrick's Day, normally a time of great celebration and festivity for all who are Irish and for those who are "Irish" just for today! While we cannot celebrate the great saint of Ireland publicly due to the coronavirus crisis and the restrictions that are in place to safeguard the health and well-being of all citizens here and around the world, we do, nonetheless, have the graced opportunity to be united in prayer, heart and spirit as people of faith.

The Bishop's Conference of Ireland issued the following statement, *"This is an occasion for all of us - especially in families - to pray more intensely for each other and especially for those who have succumbed to the illness. We should pray also for those at the frontlines - especially doctors, nurses and medical staff and other carers, including clergy - that the Lord will protect them as they place their own well-being at risk in the service of all."*

Today would be a good one to pray the prayer attributed to St. Patrick – *St. Patrick's Breastplate,*" and to ask for protection through the spiritual power of the Holy Trinity, our parish "patron" from all evil that would harm us, even the coronavirus. St. Patrick wrote it in 433 A.D. for divine protection before successfully converting the Irish King Leoghaire and his subjects from paganism to Christianity. The term breastplate refers to a piece of armor worn in battle.

When St. Paul referred to putting on the "Armor of God" in his letter to the Ephesians (6:11) to fight sin and evil inclinations, he could have been thinking of prayers just like this one! Although we may not literally wear combat gear in our daily lives, St. Patrick's Breastplate can serve as divine armor for protection against spiritual adversity today, and in the days and weeks to come.

ST. PATRICK'S BREASTPLATE

I arise today
Through a mighty strength, the
invocation of the Trinity,
Through belief in the Threeness,
Through confession of the Oneness
of the Creator of creation.

I arise today
Through the strength of Christ's birth
with His baptism,
Through the strength of His crucifixion
with His burial,
Through the strength of His resurrection
with His ascension,
Through the strength of His descent for
the judgment of doom.

I arise today
Through the strength of the love of
cherubim,
In the obedience of angels,
In the service of archangels,
In the hope of resurrection to meet with
reward,
In the prayers of patriarchs,
In the predictions of prophets,
In the preaching of apostles,
In the faith of confessors,
In the innocence of holy virgins,
In the deeds of righteous men.

I arise today, through
The strength of heaven,
The light of the sun,
The radiance of the moon,
The splendor of fire,
The speed of lightning,
The swiftness of wind,
The depth of the sea,
The stability of the earth,
The firmness of rock.

I arise today, through
God's strength to pilot me,
God's might to uphold me,
God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eye to look before me,
God's ear to hear me,
God's word to speak for me,
God's hand to guard me,
God's shield to protect me,
God's host to save me

From snares of devils,
From temptation of vices,
From everyone who shall wish me ill,
afar and near.

I summon today
All these powers between me and those
evils,
Against every cruel and merciless power
that may oppose my body and soul,
Against incantations of false prophets,
Against black laws of pagandom,
Against false laws of heretics,
Against craft of idolatry,
Against spells of witches and smiths and
wizards,
Against every knowledge that corrupts
man's body and soul;
Christ to shield me today
Against poison, against burning,
Against drowning, against wounding,
So that there may come to me an
abundance of reward.

Christ with me,
Christ before me,
Christ behind me,
Christ in me,
Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,
Christ on my right,
Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down,
Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of every man who
thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who
speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.

I arise today
Through a mighty strength, the
invocation of the Trinity,
Through belief in the Threeness,
Through confession of the Oneness
of the Creator of creation. Amen.

CORONA VIRUS UPDATE

In this time period of daily changes in our corona virus response based on the most current wisdom, I also want to give you an update on what we are doing in our parish community to mitigate the spread of disease, to keep our church open for private prayer, to protect those among us who are at high risk and most vulnerable to contract this virus, and to support the common good as we strive to show our love for God and neighbor in these difficult times.

Archbishop Etienne continues to direct that, until further notice, public celebrations of Mass throughout the archdiocese of Seattle is suspended. This includes celebrations of the weekday Mass and public prayer devotions. There is no time line for the lifting of this suspension and sadly, **this could impact our celebration of Holy Week liturgies if the coronavirus danger has not abated by then.**

I want to reassure you again, that all Catholics are *temporarily dispensed* from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass until the coronavirus danger passes. The obligation *will resume* at such time as the suspension of the celebration of the Eucharist is lifted by our archbishop.

[VIDEO CELEBRATION OF THE MASS](#)

We will continue to **videotape the Sunday celebration of the Mass on Saturday evening each week and make it available on our parish website on Sunday morning** for your time of participation, prayer, and reflection as you strive to “keep holy the Lord’s Day” in this challenging time.

[SPIRITUAL COMMUNION](#)

In those rare times, which we are now experiencing, when we are prevented from receiving Jesus Christ in Holy Communion, our Lord offers us the grace of spiritual communion when we sincerely call on Him in prayer. I want to encourage you to make a spiritual communion daily. This is an ancient spiritual practice and a grace that our Lord gives to us. In this time of uncertainty and spread of the coronavirus let us unite our prayers with all of those throughout the world who are suffering. May each prayer for spiritual communion increase our hunger for the Mass, our desire to receive our Lord and to be united with him. When you are unable to receive communion, pray:

*“My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most holy Eucharist. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot 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++*

Because of the greater difficulty in sanitizing carpets and chairs with cloth seats from germs and virus, **we have decided to close the chapel and make the church available for private prayer and spending time in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament from 9:00am to 5:00pm daily**. Please note that this is a change in hours.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

I want to thank those who have made their Sunday stewardship donations to continue the ministries and services of our parish and our Capital Campaign efforts this past weekend. Because we did fall significantly short of the collection needed each Sunday this past week, I again appeal to you to continue your giving to support the life of our parish family. You may send your contributions in the mail, drop them off in the parish office or mail slot, or you might give consideration to enrolling in our parish EFT or online giving program. Instructions are available on the front page of our parish website or by calling the parish office if you need assistance. **I am grateful to you for your giving that will help us to run the parish on a day-to-day basis and to meet our financial obligations in an uninterrupted manner until this crisis is over.**

PARISH MEETINGS, GATHERINGS, AND DEVOTIONS

All church meetings, faith formation classes, social activities, to include outside groups that use our facilities, remain suspended until April 1st, at which time we will reevaluate continuing the measures that we have implemented. During this time period, our parish offices will remain open to serve the needs of our faith family from 8:00am to 12:00pm Monday through Friday.

PASTORAL MINISTRY TO THE HOMEBOUND, HOSPITALIZED, AND CONFINED

Jesus calls us to be as present as possible to people in these circumstances and to continue the healing ministry of Jesus. Although area nursing homes and other care facilities have been closed to all volunteers **we will strive to ensure the availability of The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick to our parishioners experiencing serious illness, an ongoing weakened condition, a new illness, anticipating serious surgery, or those in danger of death.** Anointing of individual homebound parishioners can still be requested through our parish office and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Please keep our priests and their health and safety in your prayers.

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

The Sacrament of Reconciliation on an individual basis is being provided according to our regular schedule on Saturday afternoon. **We have moved the location to the church in order to maintain social distancing of six feet between parishioners waiting to celebrate the sacrament, and between priest and penitent,** whether you choose to celebrate anonymously behind a screen, or face to face. **Confessions will be heard in the parish sacristy behind closed doors.**

CELEBRATION OF WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

While all public Masses have been suspended out of concern for the public good, Archbishop Etienne has made **two PASTORAL exceptions for weddings and funerals with the following stipulations that must be strictly observed:**

There is an urgency concerning the need to pray for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed and to console their grieving families in their time of loss. A funeral Mass may be celebrated ***with immediate family members only***, at the time of death. **There are no exceptions to this requirement.** A larger Memorial Mass may be scheduled after the current crisis is passed so that extended family, friends, and parishioners can console one another and continue their prayer for the repose of the soul of the departed loved one. **This limitation also applies to a graveside service.**

The Archbishop also realizes that weddings have already been scheduled and preparations made. The celebration of a wedding can take place, but again, under the strict pastoral requirements outlined above, that is, ***no one besides immediate family members of the bride and groom may attend the wedding in the church.***

Vulnerable and at risk family members should stay at home out of concern for their health and that a safe social distance of six feet be observed between members of different households. If a family member is feeling ill, they should also stay home and not attend. *We ask your cooperation in order to make these two exceptions possible.*

CONCLUDING REMARKS

We will keep you informed of changes or additions to the measures that are currently in place in these unprecedented and daily changing circumstances. Let us keep each other, our state, our nation, and the world community in our daily prayers as we ask for protection, consolation, healing, and patience. *Let us remember too, that in his Letter to the Romans, St. Paul assures us that, “all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ... 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 8:28, 38-39).*

May God bless us all,

Verónica Kelley
Pastoral Coordinator