



St. Joseph's Parish Toronto

ENCOUNTER JESUS

Pastoral Letter to the Faith Community of St Joseph's, Toronto

Dear Friends,

God's peace be with you at this time. I am writing to you in the lead up to Holy Week 2020. This year, the celebration of our most Holy Days remembering the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus will feel quite different as we cannot come together as a faith community.

The impact of the coronavirus, COVID 19, has changed the way we live our lives. It has changed the way we express ourselves as a faith community. Yet, even in these difficult times, faith, hope and love go on. On behalf of the St Joseph's community, I would encourage all of us to continue finding creative ways to express love and kindness to those we encounter. We also need to find life-giving ways to express our faith through prayer, reflection and acts of service. To assist the community in this time, we have made regular information and resources available on our website:

torontoparish.org

We are also planning a weekly email containing updates and resources. If you would like us to maintain contact, simply email torparish@mn.catholic.org.au or sign up through our website (torontoparish.org/subscribe). For those who do not have access to the Internet, contact the Parish Office if you would like to receive a weekly 'snail mail' from the community. We are also in the process of setting up 'phone trees' to keep regular contact with everyone. If you would like to be part of this phone network, please call the Parish Office on **49592777**.

We remain committed to journeying with you as we express our shared faith together in new ways. We also appreciate that many in our community are struggling more than usual. In the weeks and months ahead, we will all be challenged in different ways and will have different needs. As a community, we are working with DARA (Development and Relief Agency) and St Vincent de Paul to continue to provide material support to those in need. Please ask for help if you need something.

As a parish, we are also experiencing the financial effects of the coronavirus shutdown. We thank the many members of our community who continue to support us through planned giving. In recent weeks, some of you have enquired about moving to 'electronic giving.' This can be a single or recurring electronic transfer, or you may wish to simply set up a direct debit as many have done (to replace envelopes). For a direct debit form, please contact the Parish Office, and for electronic transfers, the following bank account can be used:

BSB: 012-842 (ANZ Bank, Toronto)

Account name: St Joseph's, Toronto

Account Number: 316385277

Ref: Initial + Surname (and Envelope Number if you are an existing Planned Giver)

The Parish Finance Council continues to keep a close eye on the financials and cash flow of the parish. During this time when we cannot meet together, we will still need to rely on the generosity of our church community through planned giving and donations. Whilst our public activities diminish, we still have a high percentage of fixed operational expenses in our budget that need to be met. Your support during this time is welcomed and appreciated.

Finally, I want to encourage all of us to remain united in prayer. United with each other but also united with communities all around the world. Let us continue to pray for our leaders and decision makers. Let us pray for everyone on the frontline – our doctors, nurses, teachers and essential services. Let us pray through Jesus who reveals himself as ‘God-with-us.’

As we pray as a community, we may like to use the following prayer in our homes on Easter Sunday morning. May we remember that on Easter we celebrate Christ’s victory over death. We celebrate new life. May this year’s Easter take on new meaning for us as we look forward in hope to a time when we can meet again and celebrate our Christian story together as one community.

May God bless you and your families,



Brendon Mannyx, Parish Leader

EASTER PRAYER WITHIN OUR HOMES

Place a bowl of water, a lit candle and a bible on a table in front of you. Water is a sign of life, the life of Christ begun at our baptism and the candle a symbol of the light of Christ. Easter Sunday, the Day of the Lord’s Resurrection, is an opportunity to renew our baptismal faith.

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us pray.

All pause for silent prayer.

O God, through the wonder of Easter you bring new life to all creation. We pray that during this difficult time you will transform our lives and heal our world. We ask this in Jesus’ name.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us listen to God's Word.

Reader: A reading from the Gospel according to John

Read John 20:1-9

Pause for silent reflection.

Leader: United as one family in Christ, let us lift our prayers to God:

Make your own prayers for those in need at this time – family and friends, those affected by the coronavirus, the sick and those who have died. Finish each prayer with:

Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Jesus, we are Easter people and Alleluia is our song. Help us to live our Easter joy in all that we do and say. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.