

PARISH VIDEO 4 (3/23/2020)

Hello everyone. I am still here and healthy and I hope all of you are as well. This is a really difficult time for all of us. Our natural inclination is to come together physically as a family and love and support each other, but we just cannot do that now. The best way for us to be safe is to stay at home. Reach out to one another through technology. I have been calling people that I know live alone. I think they are feeling particularly isolated at this time. I suggest that you do the same. I want to remind you to keep everyone in prayer who cannot stay at home, our health care professionals who are taking care of us, our first responders who are helping us in our emergency situations, grocery store workers, restaurant workers, gas station attendants - everyone who providing us with food and other essential products and services.

We have several things available on our website. There are different ways that you can worship from home through technology, and they are listed on our website.

Also, the blood banks are very low. All of the blood drives that are normally done at churches and businesses have been cancelled. If you are not part of a vulnerable group, by that I mean of advanced age or with a chronic medical condition, and can give blood, I suggest that you consider giving now. On our website is a link [Give Blood-Red Cross](#) that can give you locations and hours of where you can give blood.

I also want you to be aware of scams. If something seems too good to be true, it is a scam. If someone tells you they have a cure for the corona virus or a miracle vaccine, this is a scam. These things do not exist at this time. Hang up on robocalls; do not respond to messages from anyone you do not know. Do not give any personal information on line or by phone such as social security numbers or information about your credit cards, investments, or bank accounts. The government and your financial institutions already have this information and will not be asking for it by phone. You can get more information about the scams at our website.

One of the things that you may want to take care of at this time is responding to the United States Census. The results of the census will be used to direct billions of dollars in federal funds to local communities for schools, roads and other public services. This information will also help us to meet transportation and emergency readiness needs. This information will also determine our political representation at all levels of government. If you do not respond to the census online, you will get a hard copy in the mail to complete and if you do not complete that someone will be knocking at your door. Help save costs for the government. We have better uses for this money at this time. You should get a letter that looks like this in the mail and it will give you the website to contact as well as your census ID number.

I also want to address the issue of confessions. Priests are generally not available for individual confessions at this time. Since priests are generally not available Pope Francis has told us that we should confess our sins directly to God, express sorrow for the sins and do a good act of contrition and your sins will be forgiven. There will be opportunities for individual confessions after all of this is over.

I think we are all feeling some anxiety and fear at this time. We can try to just ignore it and pretend that we are not feeling these things, but that is probably not going to help very much.

We have to remember that we are never alone. God is always with us. I want to suggest to you that you take your anxiety and fear to God in prayer. I want to walk you through one way to do this. Give yourself some time, at least 20 minutes. Go where you can be alone and will not be disturbed. Sit in a comfortable position. Close your eyes, relax, and just put yourself in God's presence for a few minutes. Recognize the fear and anxiety you have. Tell God all about it. Tell him about the people you are worried about and the situations that are causing you some anxiety. Then allow yourself to feel the anxiety and fear you are experiencing. Name your feelings, whatever they are: worry, anger, agitation, sorrow, whatever they are. Then open yourself up to God's love. Feel his loving embrace. Ask him for his peace. Just rest in his love until you feel that peace. You may want to do this every day. It probably will not relieve you of all of your anxiety and fear, but it will give you a sense of peace in the midst of all of this.

Finally, I want to leave you with a song.

I pray you'll be our eyes
And watch us where we go
And help us to be wise
In times when we don't know

Let this be our prayer
As we go our way
Lead us to a place
Guide us with your grace
To a place where we'll be safe

God Bless