



St. John Fisher Rectory

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A Message from our Pastor, Fr Regulo Imperial: May 3, 2020

Dear Principals, Teachers, Students and Staff of our Parish Catholic Schools:

How are you doing? The school year is close to the end. Students fear it will never resume, even for a few weeks before the end of June. Almost 7 Sundays have gone by and parishioners are concerned about if and when the church will reopen its door.

We are living in an extraordinary time, a trying time for everybody – old and young, families, business people and students, rich and poor. As your pastor and the pastor of the St John Fisher Parish faith community, my heart is aching upon seeing my people and our schools in this difficult situation. I want you to know that I am sharing the most important contribution with you - hope and prayer. Even though the church is closed, I continue to celebrate my private mass daily for your intentions, the intentions of people who offer the mass for that day, and for the well-coveted intention that we will come out of this pandemic safe, healthy and better than we were before.

God is always speaking to us. God is speaking to us more closely now and He wants us to listen. A lesson that is loud and clear for us to relearn is: ***“...no matter our sophistication, intelligence, wealth, health or status, we’re all vulnerable, we’re all at the mercy of a thousand contingencies over which we have little control.”*** As the Covid-19 virus spreads, consumes our strength and brings our normal life to a halt, our sense of vulnerability becomes pronounced. The very important lesson is that we are not in control!

In the silence of our confinement, we need to hear God’s voice. God is speaking all the time, but this time it’s louder, like through a microphone, especially when the noises around us have died down. Listen!

Yes, our school year may have ended abruptly. Yes, our graduation celebrations may not be so elaborate. Yet we have learned a lesson which is more important than what we learn in our classrooms. We learn the difficult lesson that there is someone else above us who is in control. We need to acknowledge our helplessness before God by praying daily. From now on let us value our regular devotion to the Eucharist every weekend with hope and thanksgiving.

We also learn the importance of family – now we can sit down at table together and talk. There is lots of time to help parents do some chores around the house. We can phone or video call with friends and relatives we’ve been too busy or tired to connect with in the past. We are told to stay at home and to obey health protocols in view of the good and safety of others. In these ways, we realize that love and care should also be shared to other people because we all belong to one Big Family. We can reach out to elderly neighbours and offer to pick up groceries and supplies for them, donate money to your parish church, and donate food for people struggling with poverty or unemployment. Sometimes, it takes a pandemic to teach us what is really important.

Pope Francis said, *“When we have our backs to the wall, when we find ourselves at a dead end, with no light and no way to escape, when it seems that God Himself is not responding, we should remember that we are not alone.”* Jesus is there for us. Everybody prays that we get back to normal. But after this pandemic, I ask that we be back to a new normal, the transformed normal, the resurrected normal and not the old normal that used to be.

HAPPY EASTER!

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Regulo Imperial, Pastor