



OFFICE OF THE PASTOR  
...With God, all things are possible! Matt 19:26

## ST. RITA IN THE DESERT ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

March 20, 2020

Dear Parish Family and friends of St Rita in the Desert:

As we enter into the Fourth Sunday of Lent, who would have imagined that we would be entering into a true and real 'desert' experience as a result of the Corona Virus? We had no idea that our world would be immersed in a Pandemic with these kinds of server consequences! Moreover, who would have ever thought that all our Masses would have been canceled as a result of the Corona Virus throughout our Diocese and the nation? We never saw this coming! Were we seeing, but not seeing, like what we see in this Sunday's Gospel? You see, the blind man stands as a representation of our broken humanity. It is this brokenness that is sin. Sin is a reality no matter how you look at it, or not. Sin affects our entire way of life. Moreover, if not dealt with through the God who came to give us everlasting life through His Son, Jesus Christ, we end up in total blindness. It is only when we trust in God who made us from the clay of the earth and wiped clean by the refreshing waters of our baptism, can we truly see clearly and live as the Lord desires. We cannot be sent until we are cleansed of our blindness, otherwise, we are like blind guides leading others astray. It is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who is our good Shepherd and leads us through the dark valley of death so that we may encounter Him who refreshes our Souls and cleanses us from sin. We are called to be the like the blind man and say, "I do believe, Lord." In doing so we ask the Lord into our hearts to give us peace and refreshment during our Lenten journey to see the hand of God in all of what we encounter and endure with this pandemic and hold steadfast to the Lord and His great promise of love and peace for all of us! May the Lord of light and peace come to you and grant you the sight He desires to impart upon you this day, and every day! God be praised!

This is a most challenging time for us all not only here at St. Rita in the Desert but throughout our entire diocese and the nation! Who would have thought that Masses would be suspended due to such an issue of the flu? However, it is better to be safe than sorry as they, and as such all, we can do is pray from home and pray together as a parish family for one another. It is a good time for our families to learn to go back to the basic principles of praying together. As the old saying goes, a family that prays together stays together... I know that is the ideal, but we still have to strive to pray and look for those little moments that make memories that last a lifetime. So, we can afford to turn off all our electronic devices, televisions, and learn to reconnect with one another in love and begin to learn to listen and get to know one another again. There are no guarantees in life, and life is short, and we should live as if today is our last! So, let us learn to love each other again from the heart and forgive the past hurts, and begin anew in the Lord and welcoming Him as our head and honored guest into our homes by spending time together at the dinner table offering thanks for the food, for one other, and our friends. This is a time to rekindle the spiritual practices of the Rosary, devotions, and biblical meditations so that we can grow ever deeper into the love, grace, and peace of our loving God. May the Holy Family, of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph be our inspiration this day and guide us to everlasting peace.

As I wrote in last week's bulletin letter, I was going to give the parish last year's financial report, but seeing as how we have enough information to deal with regards to the Coronavirus and all the challenges that comes with it, I have decided to hold off until we are all gathered again to go over the financial realities of our wonderful parish community! So, stay tuned details forthcoming.

Although there seems to be a great deal of gloom and doom of late due to the Coronavirus, I wanted to let you all know that while the renovation to the shrine is underway, I also wanted to inform you that the St. John XXIII Center is also undergoing a new look! Through the generous support of some parishioners and under the direction of our maintenance staff, Ken and Bill, we have painted the backside of the wall and place the crucifix there as well. Our next step is to build shelves and place the Blessed Mother and Saint Joseph opposite sides of the crucifix. So far, it is looking nice and looks like a church building. So, I wanted to share this good news with our parish family to let them know things are getting done despite not having Masses or gatherings. We continue to carry on in the name of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Lastly, another bit of good news is that we will try to upload YouTube videos of the Sunday Liturgies to our webpage. We are working on a parish Facebook page to live stream the Masses and will let you know when that becomes a reality. Please look for the links on our parish website. If you are a techy and know about all this, please e-mail me and let's meet up to get this started so that St. Rita in the Desert can be in the 21st century! God bless and keep you always!

Peace and all good to you all!

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Reverend Alonzo M. Garcia, Pastor