

Dear family in Christ

A Blessed 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter to you and your families!! It has now been over a month since I last celebrated a public Mass with the people present physically. I miss our Masses together in that physical sense. This longing draws to my heart and mind again of the people that are in places that I visited in Africa where they only had Mass once every two months. We have only gone 1 month so far.

The presence of our Lord in the Mass that we celebrated every day, or more than once every day in my case, should *increase* our longing, rather than ending up finding a way to put this grace to the side and move on. This longing should connect us with the longing that we should have for heaven, even though we have never experienced heaven this side of life, we have entered into the heavenly through our celebration of the Eucharist. Even the disciples in today's Gospel, their hearts were burning, were yearning, for the Lord again as Jesus explained His presence in the Old Testament. Just hearing the Scriptures as explained through the lens of Jesus, brought about their longing for their friend, even though they felt that Jesus wasn't with them until later, when they discovered who they were with. The Scriptures tell us that Jesus was intending to continue on, but the disciples on the road to Emmaus invited Jesus to stay with them. Isn't this a pivotal moment in the life of these disciples. Jesus was going to move on, and we, in this time can make the mistake of letting Jesus move on in our life. Isn't that what has happened in the lives of those who move away from their faith after it has been made present to them? They allow Jesus to move on in their lives. The disciples would have never discovered how the Risen Jesus was present with them if they hadn't invited Jesus to stay with them. And that is what we do at this time, when we watch Mass on TV. When we continue offering our prayers as a family. The order is to stay at home, but as Christians we should stay at home and pray. Allow Jesus to stay in our homes, do not allow Jesus to move on at this time.

Finally, I want to speak about two things: **Funerals** and **Reconciliation**.

**Funerals:** The Bishop has allowed for funeral Masses to be celebrated, but there can only be 10 people present. The priest and the funeral director each count. So, families can only have 8 people at the most. Therefore, most families are having the burial take place at this time, again with only 10 people present and then offer a memorial Mass at another time when the restrictions have been lifted. I still offer myself to be present for the burial prayers and service at the cemetery.

**Reconciliation:** At this time, God will honor your intention to be sorry for your sins, even if they are mortal sins. You have to make an act of contrition with a repentant heart and maybe offer a penance of some kind. And then to go to Reconciliation when the restrictions have been lifted.

I continue to keep you in my prayers and private Masses. May God bless your persistence in faith and perseverance in His Almighty Love. Amen.

With prayers and blessings,

Fr. Rosenbaum