

March 19, 2020, The Solemnity of Saint Joseph

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

In this very challenging time of responding to COVID-19, we are being asked to “find our way” or “feel our way” forward, without any certainty as to what’s next. And we are doing so, with all right and just concern and worry for those we love and care about, for those who are entrusted to us. I invite you to see the connection of our current circumstances to the experience of St. Joseph, who was asked, and tasked, by God to care for Mary and Jesus. That road for him was rarely clear or smooth. But, by God’s grace, he kept faith.

Go to Joseph. That was the old expression in earlier generations. Go to this glorious pillar of family life, this hope of the sick, this patron of the dying, this protector of the Church. Many of the Holy Women of Annunciation had a real and lively devotion to St. Joseph, and through them, he took care of us...and with him continue to do so now.

As you take care of one another, of family and friend, of neighbor, of yourselves, please join with me in taking care of our common needs:

- Our **Parish St. Vincent de Paul Society** – in the days and weeks and months ahead, they will be strained to the limits of their ability to respond to those in need. Additionally, our next “First Sunday of the Month” Collection, the usual means of support, will not happen because of the current suspension of public Masses. I firmly believe that we will continually find blessing in our care for our local poor – not because it’s magic, but because we’ve ordered our lives according to the Lord’s will for all of us.
- Our **Annunciation Parish School** – these are trying weeks for all in our School Community, Students, Parents, Faculty and Staff, as they adjust to distance learning. The strain is also financial: in last September’s Financial Report to the Parish, it was stated that we were projecting at least a \$50,000.00 shortfall in revenues for this current year based on enrollment. This has come to pass, and continues to grow. While we might cover it with the bank balance on hand, that leaves little for the future, and given our current uncertainties, closing the gap now will provide a more secure “return to normal” for next school year.
- Our **Annunciation Parish** – the timing of this current crisis amplifies the structural weakness of our Sunday Stewardship patterns. Usually, after Easter, as Spring becomes Summer, and many travel, we experience annually a drop in the Sunday Collection. With the suspension at this time of public Masses, that last “booster shot,” if you will, is jeopardized. There will be no “pass of the basket” for at least the next four weeks, including a First Sunday of the Month and Easter Sunday. More than \$35,000.00 in revenue is at risk of being lost.

This is a difficult time. For some, job security is in question, for others retirement portfolios are taking a big hit in the markets, for all household expenses continue. Current and future uncertainties rightly make us more financially cautious and conservative. And so what I ask of you is not done lightly. Please do not forget our Local Poor, our School, and our Parish, but be very intentional in your continued financial support by:

1. Determining your method of contribution at this time, either electronic giving or mail-in giving;
2. Completing and returning, mail or email, the attached Electronic Giving Authorization Form (if this is your chosen method of contribution) at your soonest convenience;
3. Completing and returning multiple Authorization Forms, if making contributions to more than one fund (i.e. St. Vincent de Paul, School Assistance, Sunday Stewardship);
4. Mailing secure mail-in contributions if possible in "lump-sum," one check for the total of weekly contributions and Easter Contribution you intend to make for all of March and April, to

Annunciation Parish
3547 Clifton Avenue
Cincinnati OH 45220

5. Supporting the St. Vincent de Paul Society, with a suggested doubling of your usual monthly gift, and mailing to

St. Vincent de Paul Society
3547 Clifton Avenue
Cincinnati OH 45220

6. Making a School Assistance Gift (either one-time, or in multiple payments) to Annunciation School, with the following levels of giving strongly suggested for your consideration:

\$5,000.00 --- 2,000.00 --- 1,000.00 --- 500.00

Our goal for School Assistance is \$50,000.00. I know we can achieve this!

Together, under the care and guidance of St. Joseph, with the care and company of the Holy Women of Annunciation, and in caring solidarity for the Poor, let us take care of those entrusted to us.

May God Bless,

Fr. Grogan

Attachment: Electronic Giving Authorization Form