

April 15, 2020

A few weeks back I told you that we were still booking weddings and I want to tell you that people in our parish are still dying not yet of this virus but dying without the human and religious rituals that need to accompany grief. When you pray, however, you pray, include all of the dying, the dead, and those who grieve them in these days of cruel and unfair losses.

I say unfair because no one did anything to merit this terrible viral affliction, but unfair is not really applicable to the virus either. A virus is an agent, a nucleic acid molecule in a protein coat that replicates in the host of a living cell and is usually experienced as a problem by the host.

History could be written from the vantage point of pandemics similar to what we are experiencing now, but that is not pleasant reading or thinking because the virus has driven the bus of history then and that ride is a rather bleak and unhappy journey.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Florence, Italy, during the recurring waves of viral plagues, the town leaders organized a daily delivery of two loaves of bread and about a quart of wine to be delivered to the households of the poor every day with meat and fruits and vegetables being delivered on alternate days, 6 days a week.

I woke up this morning to a text message from a friend with pictures of her window garden that framed the morning snow falling outside the window. Then I had correspondence from our office staff that demonstrated their serious care for parish details, then I called a man who had lost his wife just before this quarantine period started just to check in on him and it was his birthday which I did not know.

That birthday boy told me about all of the nice things being done in his neighborhood by people who until just days ago were strangers.

I know it is tough to stay focused and keep the fears and sadness and frustration and anger at bay, but we can do it.

Again, I do not want to give you Sweet Jesus nonsense but remember that Jesus tried to teach us that God knows what we need before we ask, so take a few moments anytime you want but at least once a day and check out what God is doing with you in these times.

I don't put much stock in miracles because I do not believe that God needs miracles to heal us and make us human in the image and likeness of Love for that is what we are and where we have come from and where we are going.