

April 6, 2020

Dear Parishioners of Saint Petronille,

I hope this letter finds you well. Although I apologize for its length, I have put in bold the titles of each paragraph so that you can scan them for the information you need.

We will be livestreaming our Triduum and Easter Services on our YouTube Channel. Simply do a google search on “Saint Petronille YouTube” and our channel will appear. Click the link and you are good to go.

**Our livestream services will be:**

Children’s Mass – Tuesday, April 7, at 10 am

**Holy Thursday**

Mass of the Lords’ Supper at 7 pm

(This is the only Mass permitted on this day.)

Adoration of the Eucharist and Altar of Repose

8:00 pm until Midnight

**Good Friday**

Noon – Stations of the Cross

3 pm – Veneration of the Cross

7 pm – Stations of the Cross

**Holy Saturday** – Easter Vigil – 8 pm

**Easter Sunday** – 9:30 am and 11:30 am

**Confessions**

If there is one thing during this time that I, as a priest, find very difficult, it is the inability to offer the Sacrament of Forgiveness, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, to parishioners. We would typically be offering many hours of confessions. The Bishop has restricted priests from hearing confessions during this time in any form but did

encourage us to hold a penance service once the “shelter in place” order is lifted. Still, this does not mean that the forgiveness of the Lord is not available even to those in the state of mortal sin. One of the best and accessible explanations was that provided by Fr. Raymond de Souza in the National Catholic Register, I include an excerpt here:

#### “Perfect Act of Contrition

The availability of the sacrament is of utmost importance, perhaps even of more importance than Holy Communion for those in a state of mortal sin. Sacramental confession is the only way that such penitents can be confidently return to a state of grace. It is true that, if it is not possible to get to confession, a private act of “perfect contrition” is sufficient for the forgiveness of mortal (grave) sins, if it includes the intention to get to confession as soon as is possible. However, it is difficult to make an act of “perfect contrition.” Contrition itself is easy to have; it’s “sorrow of the soul and detestation for the sin committed, together with the resolution not to sin again” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1451). “Imperfect contrition” is what we have when we are sorry because we are repulsed by the “sin’s ugliness” or out of “the fear of eternal damnation and the other penalties threatening the sinner” (1453). Such imperfect contrition suffices for the forgiveness of venial sins. “Perfect contrition” is motivated solely “from a love by which God is loved above all else” (1452). That means that contrition arises from love of God alone, and the sorrow of offending him, and not from fear of consequences, temporal or eternal. If I am sorry for having gossiped and passed along damaging rumors because it damaged someone’s reputation —that is imperfect contrition. If I am principally sorry because it offends God, that is perfect contrition. Perfect contrition does not replace confession, but is an emergency measure, difficult to obtain, until confession is available again. Given the difficulty of making an act of perfect contrition, pastoral charity desires to give those conscious of mortal sin some opportunity for sacramental confession.

#### Plenary Indulgences

During the pandemic, the Holy See has made available a special plenary indulgence for those suffering from the virus and others affected. Some dioceses have instructed pastors to make this known in the context of the restrictions on the sacrament on confession. For example, in Raleigh, North Carolina: The Sacrament of Reconciliation is to be suspended except for those in danger of death. All other means of providing the Sacrament should cease. In particular, the practice being observed of “stational penance” via automobile “drive throughs,” etc., should be discontinued. In addition, it needs to be noted and communicated that an indulgence has been offered by the Holy See. Please educate your

parishioners on this important measure provided to you and to them during this time. Indulgences are important, but relate only to the remission of the temporal punishment due to sin. When we sin we are guilty of the sin and the sin causes bad effects that have to be repaid in justice. The guilt of grave sin is forgiven in confession. The effects are repaid through “temporal punishment”: penance and suffering in this life, punishment in purgatory after death. Indulgences do not forgive sins. Thus they do not address the question of forgiveness of sins and the sacrament of confession.”

### **Confession**

Although we are no longer permitted to do parking lot confessions, we are permitted to hear the confession of those in the state of mortal sin. If you would like to go to confession, please simply email Fr. Eduardo [fr.eduardofg@gmail.com](mailto:fr.eduardofg@gmail.com) or me [frmilota@outlook.com](mailto:frmilota@outlook.com) and we will arrange a time and describe the proper procedure.

### **Anointing of the Sick and Viaticum**

Although we are not allowed to make routine visits to those wanting the sacrament of reconciliation and anointing, we are permitted to do so when someone is in danger or at the moment of death. If someone you love is in need, we are happy to help. Please phone the main parish line, 630-469-0404, press ‘1’ and we will be happy to absolve them of their sins, anoint them and give them viaticum.

### **Enshrine the Divine Mercy Image**

In this time of calamity, the Marian Fathers invite you to participate in a simple but incredibly powerful act of faith. To protect you and your family, we urge you to post an Image of the Divine Mercy on your front doors. Father Chris Alar, MIC, explains why: If you don’t have this Image, please visit [TheDivineMercy.org/DivineMercyImage](http://TheDivineMercy.org/DivineMercyImage) and download it for free and print it out. If you are unable to have it blessed by a priest, the Church allows you to invoke a blessing yourself or sprinkle it with holy water if you have some. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (1669) teaches that lay people, on account of their baptismal priesthood, may administer certain blessings.

### **Parish Bible Studies On-Line**

1. Mondays 9:30 - 11:30 AM Kimberly Meinhart Lectio Divina of the previous Sunday’s scripture via Go To Meeting. Contact Kimberly Meinhart at [kkmeinhart@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kkmeinhart@sbcglobal.net) or 1 (630) 244-1168 to join
2. Monday 6:45 - 8:45 PM Christine Balaty and Fr. Eduardo - comprehensive Bible study of Salvation History (We are currently studying Exodus) via zoom. Contact Christine Balaty [cabalaty5@att.net](mailto:cabalaty5@att.net) or (630)542-6233 to join

3. Thursday 7:00 - 8:00 AM Men's Bible study Jim Kornesczuk- the Gospel of Luke contact via zoom Jim Kornesczuk at jkornchex@yahoo.com or text 1 (630) 205-3668 to join
4. Saturday 9:00 - 11:00 AM Christine Balaty Lectio Divina of the upcoming Sunday's scripture via zoom. Contact Christine Balaty cabalaty5@att.net or (630)542-6233 to join.

### **How to Deal with Sequestration**

We continue our reflections on the lives of the saints and how their experience can form our own as we go through this historic and tragic moment in the history of the world. Back in the early 90s, I visited Southern Germany and the German Concentration camp at Dachau. Dachau had a special place in my heart, because it was the camp where the single largest number of clergy were imprisoned and executed...more than 2000 Catholic priests were executed there. On the far side of the camp, a series of places of worship had been erected including a synagogue and a Carmelite Monastery.

Near the entrance to the camp was a memorial to all those who died at Dachau listing each of their names. One of the names is Blessed Titus Brandsma. A Roman Catholic Carmelite priest, scholar and journalist who had openly opposed the Nazi's in his publications. He graduated from the same Jesuit university I had more than 70 years before me. Our desks were so old and worn that I wondered if I might have ever sat at a desk at which he had sat.

Because Fr. Titus wrote prolifically, we have a number of his letters including some that he wrote or which were written about him during his interment. He described in detail the dank, filthy and sparse conditions of the cell in which he was incarcerated. Perhaps the greatest separation was from the people entrusted to his pastoral care and his ability to offer and receive the sacraments. He spoke of one rare occasion when one of his confreres smuggled a consecrated host to him which he hid under his armpit as guards threw him to the ground beating him mercilessly. Typically, however, he was isolated from the sacrament, but this did not discourage him. He wrote:

"Beata solitudo, blessed solitude.' I am already quite at home in this small cell. I have not yet got bored here, just the contrary. I am alone, certainly, but never was Our Lord so near to me. I could shout for joy because he made me find him again entirely, without me being able to go to see people, nor people me. Now he is my only refuge, and I feel secure and happy. I would stay here forever, if he so disposed. Seldom have I been so happy and content."

The harsh conditions did not dampen his good humor nor cause him to despair nor prevent him from being an instrument of God's love for others. Quite on the contrary, he would give his rosary to the nurse who was about to administer the lethal dose of carbolic acid. She would write:

“He had great compassion for me. He asked me how I ended up there. I told him how things had gone. He did not show the slightest bit of hatred for me... he took my hand and said, ‘You’re a good girl. I will pray for you very much...He gave me his rosary to pray. I told him I was not capable of praying, and so it was of no use to me. He told me that even if I could not pray, I could at least recite the second part of the rosary, ‘Pray for us sinners.’ I laughed at that. ...Hundreds of priests made no impression on me; only Father Titus...I liked him.”

Titus Brandma’s “nurse” returned to the Catholic faith and testified on his behalf for his beatification.

May Almighty God bless you and keep you.

In Christ,

Fr. Thomas Milota