

A Message from Fr. Jim

God's Blessings to all,

I would like to thank everyone for their prayers and support these last few weeks as I was laid out with this nasty cold right after Easter. It was certainly one way to slow down. Please know that you too were in my prayers everyday!

It may sound strange but my illness was also a blessing. God certainly has His ways and timing. Even though I was sick after the Resurrection (Easter) I was allowed to continue the Lenten season a little longer. As I experienced the typical chills, cold sweats, coughing, sleepless nights, sore muscles and bones, stuffy head and other things I won't mention, it allowed me to understand a little more of what our dear Lord endured in His sufferings during passion week. Believe it or not my illness was a great blessing in many ways.

It allowed me to offer this little inconvenience to the Father in a new way through His son's suffering.

In today's second reading from St. Peter we hear, "For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps."

As long as you and I are on this side of eternity, there will always be opportunities to suffer. That's not necessarily a bad thing. Why? There is value in suffering when it is united to the sufferings of Jesus.

Yes, we are a people of the Resurrection and our hope and gaze is on His eternal promise of eternal joy. However, there is much to do and accomplish for each of us before our resurrection. That work is to know and serve God more and more intimately in good times and bad. To practice and then increase the virtues of faith, hope and charity in our hearts, and our lives so that we may be Christ's light for those still living in darkness.

In today's Gospel Jesus tells us "as the shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out... he walks ahead of them and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice". Let us with God's grace, whether in good times or bad, in sickness or in health, be the voice of God to those we meet.

God Bless,

Fr. Jim