

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi), a teaching that Jesus understood would be hard to grasp as the sixth chapter of the Gospel of John clearly relates. For us who do believe, it is a great gift of faith and this is what encourages us to live not for ourselves but to live like Jesus, who gave His life for others — for us! — and for the salvation of the world! So many of you are longing for this great gift of the Eucharist and I pray that your desire during this pandemic is making you draw especially closer to Him! We will all have a greater appreciation for what we have been missing. I continue to offer the Holy sacrifice of the Mass for all of you and look forward to returning next Sunday to the public celebration of the Mass.

I want to thank all of you for your prayers, cards, letters, and food during these past two weeks. I must thank the Good Lord for granting me health, as I came through this very well. I only had two days of fatigue, body aches, slight headaches and slight fever; that followed with a slight sore throat one morning and after that it was simply following protocols of isolation, taking my vitamins and eating well. I perhaps overdid the drinking of a special concoction that contained natural ingredients, including ginger, that made me become somewhat dried out in the sinuses. Drinking plenty of water was the cure for that. I am sorry that our return to public Mass had to be halted because of my sickness. We have to accept what happens in faith. We must also continue, out of charity for the least of our brethren whose health makes them more vulnerable to this virus, to follow the guidelines set in place by the authorities. Please understand that I will be following these protocols at Mass. Please also understand that I have been granted permission to leave isolation and return to regular duties, not posing a threat to anyone. These are the words I received from a nurse at Steele County Public Health. Again, I will continue with social distancing and wearing a mask when in close proximity of others. Hand washing and hand sanitizing remains the standard we all have to follow.

As we move forward, let us continue to pray for our nation. There is frustration and anxiety because of our limited living conditions which is slowly being lifted. May our Christian faith be lived out anew with those who are able to return to Mass; and for those who remain in isolation, we pray that we may be able to bring the Eucharist to you as we had been doing through our ministry to the homebound and those in assisted living.

We can be a light to many who are clouded in darkness and despair, fearing death and now afraid of what the future holds for our society, nation, and the world. Staying close to Jesus is the answer and may we be His instruments through prayer and acts of charity. Prayer has sustained me during these two weeks and your good prayers were heard and answered. Let us persevere in prayer because we need it more than ever at this time.

“This the truth each Christian learns, / Bread into his flesh he turns, / To his precious blood the wine: / Sight has fail’d, nor thought conceives, / But a dauntless faith believes, / Resting on a pow’r divine. / . . . Very bread, good shepherd, tend us, / Jesu, of your love befriend us, / You refresh us, you defend us, / Your eternal goodness send us / In the land of life to see. . .” (Words from today’s Sequence before the Gospel, known as *Laud, O Zion.*)

God Love You!!!

*Fr. Jim Staraninich*