

My Dear Friends,

The last days have been very difficult. As we continue to follow up the updates of our health care specialists, we are concerned about the health and wellbeing of our community especially those most vulnerable. The situation is calling for the collaboration of all to keep each other safe, and the way to do this is by keeping a social and physical distance, staying home and practicing extreme hand hygiene.

The temporary suspension of public Masses is very painful for all of us who love the Eucharist and long to receive Jesus in Holy Communion. However, under the current circumstances this temporary suspension of our liturgical life is pertinent since we are also stewards of life and health, ours and others.

Under these circumstances, we keep asking ourselves where God is, and whether he is trying to tell us something. I am convinced that God is, in fact, telling us something as he does at every moment of our existence. God's message is one of love, mercy and togetherness with Him and with one another. I reject any idea that describes this situation as a punishment or even a test; those ideas are incompatible with the God we know and adore. I believe that during difficult times God's voice is the response of so many who act responsively and selflessly, put others first, are in solidarity and remain steadfast in prayer. In all those, God is speaking to us of his presence, power and fidelity. I hear God speaking through a community that raises to the circumstance as true disciples of Christ. Think of doctors, nurses, first responders, scientists, government officials and so on. Can you hear God's voice through the storm in others and yourself?

This time feels a little different because the way we care for one another is by staying physically away. I believe that this necessary physical distance cannot break our communion in God and the love we have for one another.

I encourage everyone to be safe and behave responsibly in your interactions, and to take this situation seriously while remaining calm. Prayer is now our weapon to be able to act the right way and bring some peace. I also encourage you to phone family members, friends, other parishioners especially people that may be alone at their homes. God may speak His peace and love to others through you, and the Eucharist- the Sacrament of Unity- alive in you, makes you the power of God. I trust God has begun the miracle and that we will get through with Him and one another.

Our heart and our prayers are with all those who have lost their lives, those who are currently ill, health care workers and emergency services.

In Christ,

Fr. Julio