



Our Lady of the Lake Parish
19951 Lake Shore Boulevard
Euclid, Ohio 44119
phone 216-486-0850
fax 216-486-0851
www.olleuclid.org

November 20, 2020

Dear Friends and Parishioners of
Our Lady of the Lake,

I hope this letter finds you and your loved ones safe and healthy and peaceful in a time that is full of uncertainty and reasons to be stressed. There are three reasons for this letter. The first is gratitude. The second is to give you an update of our parish finances. The third is to share our plans – as of this moment – for celebrations of the liturgy during the Christmas holiday.

Gratitude:

I am very, very grateful for the support and commitment that all of you have extended to Our Lady of the Lake Parish and School during this time of pandemic. Of necessity, we have had to make many adjustments, but your flexibility and cooperation have been helpful and hopeful. School, PSR and pre-sacramental programs all have a new and different shape and feel, yet our mission of spreading and strengthening our faith continues. Weekend liturgies, funerals and baptisms are continuing as well, but in ways that are very different than pre-pandemic times.

I have observed that many people miss church, in two senses of the term. They miss the opportunity to gather for worship because of a suitable abundance of caution. But they also miss the opportunity simply to be with friends and other parishioners. And yet most remain undaunted and stay connected in whatever safe and appropriate ways they can. I am very impressed and grateful for the steady financial support of so many who contribute on-line, at Mass or by dropping an envelope in the mail or in our mailbox. So despite the uncertainty and stresses, there is much for which we can all be grateful.

Financial Report:

Included in this mailing is our annual parish and school financial report. Normally a finance council member would introduce this report at a weekend liturgy, but the council believed it is important to reach as wide a base of parishioners as possible and recommended it be mailed to everyone. You will see that although church income is at a slight deficit, that deficit is not as large as one might have expected given the circumstances. This is still another reason for gratitude. You will also note that we were the beneficiary of a Payroll Protection Program (under notes, loans and mortgages payable). School enrollment is very strong and the income stream is very steady. Please review the report and if you have any questions, feel free to contact the rectory. We will put you in touch with Chris Malik, our business manager, or one of the members of our finance council.

Christmas liturgies:

As with every other parish in the diocese, we have wrestled with how to approach our Christmas liturgies. What I am describing in this mailing **is our current plan**. Please know that there are still many uncertainties in this pandemic, so things can change right up to Christmas Eve. It will be important for everyone to be attentive to our website and social media sites for the most up-to-date reports of our plans.

As of this writing, we are planning a slightly different Christmas Eve/Christmas Day schedule than usual. There will be no midnight Mass this year. We will celebrate at 4pm and 7pm on Christmas Eve and 10 am on Christmas Morning. The protocols we have been following regarding the wearing of masks and social distancing remain in effect and will be even more important going forward. There will continue to be no congregational singing. The church will be decorated, but a little more modestly than in previous years.

We have been very careful to pray well and to pray safely during this pandemic. In order to continue to do so, participation at Christmas liturgies will be by reservation only. There will be limits on the number of people who can participate in any given liturgy. The reservations will be on a first come, first serve basis. They can be made for individuals as well as for family units, but it will be necessary to have an accurate number of family members who would be attending. We will begin taking reservations on December 8th and will continue to do so until all available seats have been claimed. Please keep an eye on our parish website and bulletin for a link to an app through which you can make your reservation on-line. We will also be live-streaming at least one liturgy at Christmas, maybe more. We have purchased the necessary technology to make this possible and will be up and running by the Christmas holiday.

Please note that the dispensation from the obligation to worship on weekends extends to and includes the December 8th holy day (Immaculate Conception) and Christmas Eve/Christmas Day. I strongly encourage everyone to exercise an abundance of caution as you make your decisions about if and how you plan to participate. By exercising this caution, you protect not only yourself but your sisters and brothers in the parish as well.

Last but not least, please remember that this is **our current plan** as of **this moment**. Things can change quickly, so please be attentive. Also, I ask that you share this information with those who might come on the holiday but are not in our parish data bank. No matter how all of this plays out, please continue your dedication and commitment to each other and the parish. Please pray for one another. Be assured of our prayers for you and your loved ones.

Have a Blessed Christmas,



Fr. Joe Fortuna, Pastor