

Dear St. Columbkille Family,

There are 3 rules we are getting more familiar with these days and those are to protect ourselves from COVID 19. Many of you maybe don't know these rules can be found in the Bible, even quarantining was implemented in many places.

1. **Washing of Hands**, Exodus 30:17-21 "The LORD told Moses: for ablutions you shall make a bronze basin with a bronze stand. Place it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it. Aaron and his sons shall use it in washing their hands and feet. When they are about to enter the tent of meeting, they must wash with water, lest they die. Likewise, when they approach the altar to minister, to offer an oblation to the LORD, they must wash their hands and feet, lest they die. This shall be a perpetual statute for him and his descendants throughout their generations."

2. **To use face mask**, Leviticus 13: 43 -45 "If the priest, upon examination, finds that the infection spot on the bald area on the crown or forehead has the same reddish white appearance as that of a scaly infection of the skin, the man has a scaly infection and is unclean. The priest shall declare him unclean; his infection is on his head. The garments of one afflicted with a scaly infection shall be rent and the hair disheveled, and the mustache covered. The individual shall cry out, "Unclean, unclean!"

3. **Social distancing**, Leviticus 13: 46 "As long as the infection is present, the person shall be unclean. Being unclean, that individual shall dwell apart, taking up residence outside the camp.

Since we do not live long enough to experience this type of situation more than once in a lifetime and the lack of interest on reading today to enrich our general culture, we may suffer more from stress, confusion and negative feelings during illness, epidemics and pandemics.

We should remember that according to Genesis, the first book of the Bible, when God decided to create fish, He spoke to the water. When God decided to create trees, He spoke to the earth; But when He decided to create human being, He spoke to himself: "Let us make the human beings in our image, after our likeness" Gn.1,26

If we unroot a tree, it will die and if we pull a fish out of the water, it will die; likewise, if the human being disconnects himself from God, we will die. God is our natural environment; we have been created to live in his presence; we must stay connected with Him because only on God life is preserved.

We should remember that water without fish remain as water, but fish without water doesn't survive. The planet without trees remain as a planet, but trees without a planet doesn't exist. Likewise, God without human beings remains as God, but the human beings without God will have no life.

We believe the Bible is the word of God because it shows the many ways the people of God became connected with the creator, were saved, guided and inspired in a permanent interaction. The history of salvation continues in our time through Jesus's teachings and

protection through the Holy Spirit. What we are facing worldwide today is one of those times in history where God advises us through his words. As I have said before, all storms will pass and the pandemic will go away, with or without a vaccine, but it is our responsibility to receive the wisdom our Bible reminds us.

We may feel so drained to hear about the pandemic that we may not pay attention any longer to what is related to it, but the fact is that this pandemic is not over and as we try to have “a normal life” we should continue to take precautions for a long period.

As a reader of this pastoral communication, here at St Columbkille we are doing our best to keep our environment sanitized and safe. Please, become familiar with our regulations and share it with people you may know who are not yet coming to church. I am not only reminding the importance of practicing sacraments but more importantly to keep feeding our spiritual life.

- a) When you attend church, you must remember to bring your face mask and keep it on out of respect to others.
- b) Practice social distancing when you find a seat and when you come up to receive Holy Communion.
- c) Use hand sanitizer which is placed at each door, once you enter and when you leave the church.
- d) Families may stay together and if someone feels sick they should stay home.
- e) Take a bulletin on your way-out following mass.
- f) It is always joyful to meet with friends at the end of the mass, but we do recommend to meet socially outside the building taking advantage of our good weather and observing distancing.
- g) Your donations and offertory envelopes can be dropped off before or after mass in one of the donation boxes located throughout the Church.

Our Weekend Masses are: Saturday 3:00pm and 5:00pm & Sunday 7:00am, 9:00am 11:00am and 5:30pm. We keep a count of the number of parishioners for each mass, if it is deemed necessary, we will schedule overflow masses in our Parish “Iona Hall” to observe the social distancing.

I invite you to our **Communal Rosary and Marian Novena, Saturdays at 8:00am.**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is taking place under the Portico on Saturdays from 8:30am to 9:30am, and by appointment contacting one of the Priests at 239-489-3973.

We are providing **the Eucharist to Homebound**, if you or someone you know wishes to receive our pastoral care and the sacraments, let us know. We are not yet attending nursing homes and Hospital visits are very limited.

Gospel Forum for Women Tuesdays at 9:00am now in (Ministry Center Room 1) please, bring your Bible, keep your face mask on inside the building and observe the distancing.

Men Fellowship Group is still meeting online using Zoom on Mondays at 7:00pm. For additional information call Tom Holland at 508-0668.

Youth Group 2020-2021 Confirmation Preparation / Faith Formation for Children / Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) Classes via Zoom, for additional information contact the Parish office.

The **2021 Offertory Envelopes** are available in the narthex (entrance of the church) If you prefer, we can mail them to you, please contact the parish office at 239-489-3973. We are open every day from 8:30am to 1:30pm from Monday to Friday.

Our 2021 Parish Calendars are available to take out after weekend masses.

To the parishioners that came to receive Holy Communion under the Portico yesterday, Sunday, November 15th please accept my deepest apologies. The Mass of the Bishop at 11:00am unexpectedly was extended. I will be there this Sunday, November 22nd from 12:00pm to 12:30pm distributing communion to those who follow the mass on tv. Again, I apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused you.

May the Lord be with all of you and your love ones.

Fr. Lorenzo