

Dear Parishioners,

We live in very difficult times facing an uncertain and ruthless pandemic and many of us are stressed beyond belief. We need to trust in God that no matter what happens in the upcoming weeks and months that his healing presence will be with the sick and their families and with the dying. God will protect all of us under the mantle of Mary who intercedes for us.

School is back in the swing of things and St. Joseph School has 134 students enrolled up from 119 students at the end of the academic year in 2020. We are pleased to be able to continue teaching our young people with dedicated teachers, staff and administration in a safe and secure environment during this covid19 pandemic.

Although we are not fully back to church capacity and are limited to a certain number of 100 or 25% church capacity, we are still seeing the numbers increase at the Masses we offer in the cluster each weekend. We are encouraged by the work of the pharmaceutical companies who are working on a vaccine to be used first for the medical personnel and first responders and for the elderly.

Since June 1<sup>st</sup> I have been struggling with my knee that has been a problem since I injured it three years ago. I have been walking with a cane for two months after I tried unsuccessfully to have my knee aspirated and have cortisone injections. After the MRI that indicated that I had bone on bone and a torn meniscus a difficult decision had to be made. I needed to undergo complete knee replacement surgery. The doctor told me the recovery was going to be between six to eight weeks. I will not be able to drive for a month because it is my right knee. I have staff in each church that will be keeping me informed of news in the parish and of any immediate issues that may need to be addressed. Please understand that I will need time to recuperate so that I will come back stronger than before. I place you all in the capable leadership of Fr. Tony and Fr. Henry and the many other priests like Fr. Roland, Fr. Victor, Fr. Dennis and Fr. Castaldi that will be assisting when they are able.

Please keep me in your prayers as I recover from this knee replacement surgery, knowing that with your prayers, and the help of God, I will fully recover and be able to resume my former duties and responsibilities to the good people of St. Brendan the Navigator Community.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*Fr. Mark*

Rev. Mark D. O'Donnell  
Pastor  
St. Brendan the Navigator Community