



My Dear Parishioners,

Praised Be Jesus Christ! After months of not writing in this column, it's good to be back to the routine, but it's also challenging. Where to begin? Given all that has transpired and all that is still happening in our country, where to begin? Rather than typing poetically about such huge realities, I thought I would begin with the obvious...which is not so obvious these days. Namely, the experience.

In the midst of the pandemic, I kept hearing that "we are all in this together". Fair enough, but that expression doesn't really say much, does it? Then I came across a writing that said, "We are in the same storm but each in a different boat". That made more sense to me, recognizing the universal reality but leaving room for the individual experience. For one, the pandemic may be devastating. For another, not so much.

So how about you? What impact has this time had on you? And specifically the absence of public Masses? That might sound like a small question, but it's not. It's actually very important that we answer that honestly. And guess what? There is no right or wrong answer. For the rest of this column, I share words from Jeff Mirus from CatholicCulture.org:

Each of us is different, and each of us responds differently—emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually—to the deprivations we have experienced. It is important to recognize two critical truths about such deprivations. The first is that, through the very mystery of being joined to Christ through the Church, God supplies our spiritual needs if we seek His help even when we cannot nourish ourselves through the Church's vital sacramental system. We need have no doubt about that. And the second is that our feelings do not matter in and of themselves; it is how we respond to those feelings that counts.

What is important is to assess these feelings—these affective responses to our current situation—to see how they may be working either to draw us closer to God or to cause us to drift away. When we assess them prayerfully in the light of faith, we then begin to see what we must will ourselves to do. One person might need to avoid succumbing to anger or bitterness because of the unavailability of the sacraments, thereby being pulled away from God in the very act of decrying spiritual deprivation. Another might need to overcome a growing indifference to the whole situation, cooling into that lukewarmness which Christ Himself condemned (Rev 3:16). Still another might need to develop special prayers and disciplines to combat particular temptations or sins. And so on.

But there is no right answer as to how we *feel*. Feelings are never good or evil in themselves; they become so only through our unfaithful resistance or indulgence. It is their assessment in the light of faith, along with the corresponding exercise of our will conformed to God, that turns feelings to good account, no matter what they are. As we begin to merge back into an ordinary Catholic life that should never again be considered ordinary, we must all be guided not by our feelings, no matter what they may be, but by our Faith.

May that guiding continue for all of us in stormy times.

Peace, Fr. Rogers

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#### Father's Day Cards

Father's Day cards are available in the back of Church beginning the weekend of June 6-7. All fathers will be remembered throughout the month of June. Envelopes with their names will be placed and will remain on the altar throughout the month.

