Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I wanted to keep you all updated about what is going on here at the church and to offer you some encouragement in this difficult time. Like last Sunday, we will have confessions in the church this Sunday (3/29) as well. Confessions will be heard from 10:00am to 11:00am. We will also have Adoration outside from 9:00am to 11:00am. The Blessed Sacrament will be placed on an altar under the canopy leading to the office chapel (at the far right when you come in down the driveway). You will be able to adore Our Lord from your car, or outside of your car if you keep a safe distance from others. We will have the Procession in Time of Epidemic and Plague at 11:00am. If the weather is not good it will have to take place inside the church, and unfortunately, that means that no one except for myself, my server and my two chanters will be permitted inside. Let’s pray for good weather! I will be giving out hard copies of this centuries old prayer from the Roman Ritual to those who would like one.

The bulletin will be posted online each week (and I will put a copy of this message in the bulletin). As you can see in the bulletin, our contributions are down significantly. Please continue to support us in this difficult time, especially if your wages have been unaffected by the pandemic. For those whose income has been affected, even a small contribution is helpful. We will leave a basket at the altar rail for those coming to confession and we will come around to your cars with a basket before the procession. Contributions can also be mailed (thank you to all of those who have sent in envelopes). To all of my parishioners, please pray for our parish. We may not currently have public Masses, but we together are still the Church of God -The Body of Christ. We may be separated in space, but we are together in the Holy Spirit.

One may ask why it is that God has permitted such a pandemic to affect us. On the one hand, we have many people who are suffering and dying as a result of this pandemic, and then there is the shocking state of affairs where the public celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass has ceased throughout much of Christendom. We must of course recognize the natural causes of such a pandemic, but we cannot help but note what Holy Scripture says about chastisement. Plagues have served as punishment for sin (e.g. Lev 26), including idolatry (e.g. Psalm 105(106):28-29). If anything good has come from this pandemic so far, it is that certain sins of deed have undoubtedly been reduced simply on account of being locked in our homes. And with the cessation of the public celebration of the Mass, I have no doubt that liturgical abuses and offenses against the Blessed Sacrament have declined sharply. Now then is a time when we as individuals and as families can offer up fervent prayers of reparation. Pray and make sacrifices for the conversion of sinners and for reparation for sin. Whether this pandemic is a purely natural phenomenon or not, we are most certainly being tested. Our faithfulness to Christ in this time provides great consolation to His Sacred Heart, wounded so sorely by the sins of men.

Know that all of you are in my prayers and that I remember you daily in the celebration of the Holy Mass. Please feel free to communicate with me by email at jclifton@archdpdx.org or by phone at 503-286-3929.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Clifton