

SUPPORTING OUR PARISH FAMILY

Just the past few days have left hundreds of thousands of hardworking people in a state of bewilderment and fear, as they try to understand how they will meet necessary expenses for themselves and their families. The shuttering of so many businesses and furloughing of so many employees because of efforts to slow the spread of the coronavirus is leaving huge numbers of men and women without a sense of financial security.

As you can imagine, the broad cancellation of Masses by the Diocese to help eliminate any large gatherings where the virus can be communicated also has a dramatic impact on the financial health of St. Lawrence. We went from a robust collection of over \$14,000 the weekend of March 8th, to just over \$9,000 on March 15th when attendance became non-obligatory. As of March 22nd, we will be receiving only what our parishioners take the time to mail in (with the office closed, dropping anything off is tricky). Given the fact that your generosity is what pays the salaries of our staff, enables us to maintain the church and other parish facilities, and gives us funds to undertake necessary ongoing repairs, the prospect of even a handful of weekends without a healthy collection is very worrisome!

This season of Lent, as you know, is founded on three spiritual pillars: prayer, fasting (or sacrifice), and almsgiving (or charity). In the spirit of the season, and trusting that you join me in wanting St. Lawrence to continue to flourish, **could I ask that you please remember the parish at this extraordinarily challenging time?**

- Those who regularly use the envelop system are asked to please mail them to us. As mandated by NYS, the rectory office must now remain closed.
- Those who normally give cash are asked to write a check for the time being.
- Those who do so much of their banking, bill-paying, etc. online are asked once again to consider using **Faith Direct**, the simple electronic means of parish support that is designed for unforeseen and challenging situations *just like this!* To register, all you need to do is go to www.faithdirect.net and use our parish code: NY234. Or simply call 1-866-507-8757. It literally takes 15 minutes, and can make such a difference in the financial wellbeing of our spiritual home.

Please also remember that, while Masses will not be celebrated publicly, **Easter is coming!** The Easter collection is **one of the most important of the entire year**, and we greatly need our parishioners—including those we don't see so often—to help. You should be receiving a special envelope for Easter; please give prayerful consideration to what you might give in a spirit of bold and generous stewardship, and keep that envelope ready for the mail. I'm so deeply grateful for your ongoing support, in good times and in bad! Thank you ~

Father Brian