

May 14, 2020

5th Week of Easter

I would like to begin this week's note by thanking everyone once again for their kind remembrance of my 25th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood last week. Despite the constraints of the lockdown it was a busy day, many phone calls, messages and the drive-by. I know I mentioned on the Sunday before not to do a drive-by but it turned out that our mayor retracted her position on such events and so it did proceed with my blessing.

During the month of May we have been encouraged by the Holy Father to pray the Rosary, with the special intention of seeing the end of this pandemic. Seeing that today is Thursday we reflect on the Luminous Mysteries of the rosary. (These are the relative young mysteries given to us by John Paul II.) The second mystery is, "The Wedding Feast at Cana". As I was meditating on this mystery, I recalled the words of Our Lady spoken to Jesus at that event, "They have no wine." Now when we look at the image of wine in the Old Testament, it is symbolic of the outpouring of God's kingdom. As the prophet Isaiah tells us, in the fullness of God's kingdom, on his holy mountain there will be a rich feast prepared for us, of fine food and well-aged wine.

But at the same time we also see that presence of wine, of abundant wine, is symbolic of basic human life. When we gather with family and friends, when we celebrate, when we live in the joy of basic human companionship we break out the wine. Alas, this pandemic has taken away the wine of life and we are beginning to feel it. "They have no wine", Mary said to Jesus. Lord we have no wine. We are missing severely the good wine of life.

In the Gospel for this coming Sunday we will hear Jesus speak about the promise of the Holy Spirit. He tells us that he will not leave us orphans. The presence of the Spirit in our lives leads us into the life of the Trinity. "On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you." (John 14: 21) It is in our communion with Jesus, in our awareness that Jesus dwells within us, that the fullness of the kingdom of God is manifested to us.

During these days of the pandemic many of us are missing and longing for the "wine" of basic human interaction and normal social life. But the wine of the Kingdom of God is always there, for the Spirit dwells within us and leads us ever deeper into the life of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

And so my dear friends let us use these days of the pandemic to deepen our prayer lives. Let us cultivate a more contemplative understanding of prayer, moving beyond words, beyond requests, beyond the noise of our dispirited souls and be held in stillness by the love of God.

The Lord knows that the good wine of life has been taken from us and so allow Him to be for us the true wine of the kingdom of God.

Make sure to join us for Mass on the parish Facebook Page at 9 am on Sunday mornings. It is great that so many of you are coming together as a parish at that time.

Father John and I are available to hear confessions by appointment. Call the parish office at 905-332-5115 or email jschnurr@hamiltodiocese.com or ehenhoeffer@hamiltodiocese.com. We will make sure to observe a proper distance. This time of year we can meet outside.

We are also available for the Sacrament of the Sick in a serious case. We would observe proper precautions, wearing a mask, etc. So do not hesitate to call us if you are ill or have received a bad diagnosis. There is much more than Covid-19 affecting us at this time.

I would also like to thank all of those who have continued their financial support of the parish during this time of closure. This past week we finally received the envelopes from the appeal that the bishop sent out as well as the cheque for the monies donated on the Diocese website via Canada Helps. Many of you have also taken advantage of the Interac e-transfer option via the parish email. If you go on the parish website you can see the links on how to donate. Again thanks for your generous support.

Some of you may have seen on the parish Facebook pictures I posted of the Marian altar at the doors of the church. Thank-you to Susan Williams, co-president of the CWL, for the loan of the Our Lady of Fatima statue. If you are out for a walk-stop by and say a prayer. Pray that we will soon be able to open the doors of the church. (Please do not congregate as a large group to pray)

Finally, some people have been asking what news we have on re-opening. We have no news. The bishops of Ontario do have a working committee to try to come up with some ideas on what may be possible. But of course it will be up to the civil authorities to approve. In different parts of the world churches are opening up but each area has its own policies. (As an example you could look up what the Archdiocese of Detroit is doing as they will be opening for public celebrations next week)

God bless everyone and see you Sunday.

Father Ed

P.S and for those with access to music books here are this Sunday's hymns



(Before Mass - CBW 462 I Sing a Maid)

Gathering - CBW 384 Christ is Alive

Offertory - CBW 466 Father, Lord of Earth and Heaven

Communion - CIS 6.1 Bread for the World

Closing - CBW 383 Alleluia, Give Thanks