



All Saints | Holy Family | St. Rose of Lima
OUR CATHOLIC FAMILY OF PARISHES

April 11, 2022

To: Our Catholic Family Parishioners
Fr: Fr. Keiter
Re: Honoring Our Past

Dear Parish Families and Parishioners:

As we approach May 1st and our change in the Weekend Mass schedule and locations, I want to recognize the reality that loss is probably the most difficult part of any change. We all understand the reality of change in our life but loss is a more difficult part of change to handle in our lives. Loss puts four possible responses before us, that we can choose as we move forward in life. When we experience loss we can attempt to **restore** what we lost. We can also approach loss with the decision to **replace**. For example, if someone loses their job at their place of employment they could attempt to convince their boss to rehire them, whatever they did to cause losing their job they will change to get their job back – **restore**. However, someone else that loses their job might simply go out and find a comparable job somewhere else – **replace**.

There are two other possible responses toward loss. We could choose to **redesign**. Let's say someone loses their job, but they decide this is God at work, giving them the chance to start the at home business they always talked about and dreamed about, so they start this business. They have just **redesigned**. With this redesign they then make a final choice to **relinquish** what once was and allow themselves to live in this change and trust God's plan for them.

I want to honor the reality of our loss of Masses with our upcoming change, but at the same time, encourage you to see how God our Father is at work and will guide us by the power of His Holy Spirit to show us what we can do to be a flourishing Our Catholic Family of Parishes with a vibrant Sunday experience.

Yes, we are relinquishing four of our Weekend Masses but we also have been given the opportunity to really focus on the four Masses we are retaining to make them a vibrant experience for all because the celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of the Paschal Mystery and thus at the heart of who we are as Catholics.

I would like to share three particular areas among several that we have the opportunity to really embolden and thus make our Sunday Liturgies a vibrant experience for everyone in attendance.
(over)

ourcatholicfamilyinfo@gmail.com

All Saints
303 Omaha Street
Fordyce, NE 68736
402.357.3506

Holy Family
106 W. 889 Road
Hartington, NE 68739
402.357.2465

St. Rose of Lima
1302 W. 5th Street
Crofton, NE 68730
402.388.4814

Our first opportunity is in being very intentional about the first impression and welcome when anyone arrives at our Churches for the Weekend Mass. It is so important that our Ushers/Greeters are intentionally welcoming everyone as they arrive. Yes, it is nice to hold the door open, but greeting them with a “Hello” or “Good Afternoon” or “Good Morning” along with “Welcome to (name the particular Church)” as well as the other suggestions I mentioned in the recent **Usher / Greeter Catechesis and Training Video** that we sent out to everyone in Our Catholic Family of Parishes are important and necessary ways that we can be intentionally welcoming and make that great first impression at all our Sunday Masses. Remember, as I mentioned in the video it is also important for us say “Thank You” to everyone for celebrating Mass with us as they leave. All of this makes a positive impression.

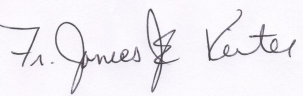
Another opportunity we have as we begin our new Mass schedule is with our music. Music is such an important and powerful element to our Liturgies and prayer. We are blessed with many who sing in our choirs and play piano or organ for our Masses. Thank You. However, with our reduced scheduled, we have many choir members and musicians that can help build up and bolster the other choirs on those weekends when their particular Church that they currently participate at in the choir and music ministry is not scheduled. I am encouraging all of us to help build up our music ministry and seek to create that vibrant Sunday experience with beautiful music that touches peoples’ souls and draws them into participation and prayer like never before.

A third opportunity that God is giving us in these changes is the ability to be intentional about our fellowship, participation and exhibiting how we are One Body of Christ. We are blessed with seven beautiful Churches that our great grandparents and grandparents sacrificed for so that we could worship in them today. Even though we will not be able to have Sunday Mass in all of them every Sunday, we give tribute to them by continuing to support and upkeep these beautiful Churches not just by our financial support, but more importantly by building up who we are really called to be as the Body of Christ. It seems that the Sunday Mass has become, simply an obligation that we attempt to see how quickly and conveniently we can fulfill so we can then do our own thing. The Sunday experience for our grandparents and great-grandparents was a family experience that was filled with the celebration of the Mass, fellowship afterwards and a true building up and living as the Body of Christ. Let us seek to honor them and honor who Jesus has called us to be and live as the Body of Christ. May we come to desire the Sunday experience that it is not simply seen as an obligation.

You see, Jesus gave us the Holy Mass at the Last Supper on that Holy Thursday some 2000 years ago. I understand we are decreasing our number of Masses due to the circumstances we currently face, but the Mass is not changing. Let us seek to create that vibrant Sunday experience that builds us all up as the Body of Christ. As I said at our Town Hall meetings a few weeks ago, this is a time where we need all hands on deck. Let us be who Jesus has called us to be by our Baptism, The Body of Christ, that is united as the early Church was in learning the teachings of the Apostles, the Breaking of the Bread (Mass), fellowship and prayer!

Join us at any of our Masses on Divine Mercy Sunday to honor our past and look forward to what God has planned for us. May God Bless all of you!

Sincerely,



Fr. James Keiter
Pastor