

## **From the Deacon's Desk**

How often do we thank the Lord for the things that we have, but don't stop to thank Him for the challenges and hardships in our lives? Yes, it sounds strange, but this is something that we, as Catholic Christians, should do, and do often. We are all facing new and often difficult challenges these past several weeks, and it doesn't hurt to stop for a minute, think, pray, and realize that, as bad as things may seem to be for us, someone else probably has it worse. In moments like this, instead of feeling sorry for ourselves, we need to thank God for our challenges and the strength He gives us to face them.

I have never been a fan of online learning. In fact, I ran from it like a root canal because, in my limited experience teaching what was called a "telecourse" years ago, I hated the disconnect between the instructor and the student. I thrive on the personal, one-one- interaction with people, which is why I like teaching using collaborative learning. Needless to say, I wasn't pleased to find out 5 weeks ago, that all of our instruction at the college was going to be forced online, and, by the way, we had a little over a week to figure out how to do it! So, since the going got tough, this guy got going! I adapted, changed my quizzes exams, and labs, and made Zoom an uneasy partner in my teaching. I hate it, but I am doing it? What choice do I have?

Through all of this, Donna and I have had to sacrifice, but we are very grateful that things are not much worse. I still have a job and a paycheck, we are still able to get food, and we still have a roof over our heads. We know that some have it much worse: those that are struggling with a job loss, with family

members lost or otherwise somehow affected by this pandemic, some not knowing how they will pay the bills or where their next meal will be coming from. We continually pray for them and help out wherever we can. But, what is the one thing that we all have in common as both Americans and Catholic Americans? HOPE.

Hope is what distinguishes us from all of the other countries of the world, and hope is what separates us as Catholic Christians from those who don't believe. As I look out my dining room window while writing this, as I see buds and leaves on the trees I planted last fall, and as I hear the birds singing in those trees, I see signs of rebirth and new hope, and I know that my faith in Our Lord and His resurrection gives me hope that we WILL get through this, that we all be "reborn" in some way, that God sent this challenge to us for a reason, and I hope that we come out of this crisis better than we were: more caring, more compassionate to one another, more tolerant of others' differences. Maybe we all could say a short prayer each day, and have it begin like this: "Lord, if there is to be a "new normal," please let it be more "we" and less "me."

**My Our Lord be with all of you and your families as you continue to deal with this pandemic, and may He give you His peace.**

Deacon David

