

October 16, 2015

Dear Parishioners:

In my letter to you this past May, I announced that soon we would be transmitting the 9:00 am Mass by live stream as soon as we had the physical and human resources to do it. My main purpose for this was to enable those who, due to illness or physical incapacity, cannot be present at Mass. Live streaming is a way to bring Mass into their homes and convalescent homes through the Internet.

Members of the Pastoral Council did the research and spearheaded the training. We needed to purchase the equipment, recruit and train volunteers, and visit all the places where our “shut-ins” reside. For those who already had tablets and computers, it was relatively easy. For those who did not, we needed to provide for them devices that would enable them to view Mass on their TV sets. We wanted to make sure that no one was left out.

As I mentioned in my recent “State of the Parish” address, we were blessed with a good number of volunteers. We provided the training and developed a protocol, so that there was uniformity in the presentation. There were also some legal issues we had to deal with. We went “on the air” on September 13. Father Mark Bandsuch was the first celebrant. There were a few minor glitches that day, but in general it was a great success.

The people for whom it is intended, the “shut-ins,” were ecstatic at witnessing Mass at St. John Fisher from their residence. They feel more a part of our community. I got this immediate feedback from the Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist to the Sick. The other day I visited someone’s home to administer the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. The person shared how excited she was to witness the celebration of Mass. She had never seen our new church. She saw me dismiss the ministers at the end of Mass. Then about 20 minutes later that person was at her home to bring her Holy Communion. If our video ministry did only that, it is already a smashing success. I think we are just beginning to see the potential of this new ministry.

Many people involved have made this happen. I would like to mention two by name, both members of the Pastoral Council; Dr. Hanan Tanios, Council Chair, and Robert Rapoza. She focused on the outreach to the home bound, and he coordinated the recruitment and training of the volunteers. Their tenacity and commitment has made the dream a reality.

As Jesus said, “Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters, you do to me.”

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Msgr. David A. Sork  
Pastor