



Reflections of the pastor 6.18.20

What a awful experience for all of us since March 18, 2020. A complete shutdown of our church! Office staff has been reduced through most of this time to periodic presence of Indira and Jan. Thank goodness for David Androvic and our faithful Mass 'streamer' Lorenzo Dimson who have enabled us to be in virtual daily contact with one another for Mass on the internet. Little did we know when we installed the security camera in the church last October (with its capacity to stream) how important it would be! We thought it might be very useful when we had an overflow of congregation (Christmas, Easter, etc.) to stream the Mass to the hall, or for weddings/funerals. There was no thought of pandemic. Thank you to so many for your kind and encouraging comments. Our congregation now spans not only our nation but also our world with viewers even in the Phillipines and India.

Thank you also to those who have been continuing weekly offerings to support our parish. Our parish has been hit hard as you can imagine. I remember one observation I had when I came as pastor over five years ago that our parish is strong and vital in everything but its financial situation. We've done well over these years to build up and maintain our plant, but now we will have to begin again to work on solidifying our financial base. But I know that COVID 19 has taken its toll on the finances of most people. Despite that, many are continuing to be generous. Thank you.

Thank you to our staff, Indira, Chris, and Jan who have continued to keeping a cheerful presence, even when it was from home. Thanks to Jeannine for joining our weekly meeting to assess and plan our responses to the sometimes almost daily announcements from Government and Archdiocese. I thank this team for their personal support, advice, and work! Lorenzo Dimson has been so generous to man the office daily Monday to Saturday from 10 am to 2 pm as well as to stream our daily Masses. Our lectors, PJ, Chantal, and Louise, have been absolutely faithful. Without David Androvic and his crew the Sunday streaming Masses would not have happened. Thanks to Dale Rogalsky and Lestor Espiritu for their spirited music, to camera man, Orlando, and to our Sunday 'streamer', Markel Seitz! Thank you to Chris Janes for adapting our church to the protocols for safety of all. With our Masses now slowly becoming 'public' again (still only 25 persons allowed to date!), our church must be 'safe' for everyone. And so masks must be worn, physical distancing practised, and the church must be sanitized after every Mass.

Jeannine Pistakwa and her staff have been extraordinary in their care of our students and parents in our school. Thanks for their diligent efforts in keeping our students 'in school' while they are at home. It has been a painful experience for them and all the students and parents. One cannot even imagine the energy and time spent by everyone to keep forming and educating our little ones during this pandemic time. It has been a feat for our school to continue its mission. Teachers have had to adapt to internet teaching pretty well overnight. And they have done a splendid job. I have been told that student engagement during this trying two and a half month time has been 96%, including involvement even in after school programs (a tribute also to our parents!). Extraordinary. Recently they have had to adapt to allow students to come back to meet teachers in their classes but with seemingly 'thousands' of protocols to adhere to for the safety of all. Again, all are meeting the challenge! Kudos to our school administration, staff, parents, and students!

Twenty families applied for bursaries for our school next year, 2020-2021. Your generosity enables 30 youngsters from 20 families to attend St Ignatius School this fall. We budget \$50,000.00 from our operating budget for bursaries. We had to add another \$12,000.00 to accommodate the needs of families this year.

Because of the rules governing travel between provinces, we were not able to welcome Fr. Peter Monty this summer. It is a disappointment for all of us. He agreed to re-book his flight ticket for next summer!



Fr. Joe left us on June 2nd and is now in Montreal. He did not have to go into quarantine there because he tested negative in the test. We all already miss him. We were not able to fete him properly, although we Jesuits did have a farewell dinner for him and presented him a gift computer from the Jesuit community and, on your behalf, from the parish. He will return in the fall so we can give him a proper farewell.

Fr. Con Mulvihill will arrive July 3rd. He is missioned to our parish. Of course, he will have to be quarantined for two weeks before jumping into the traces. Can't wait!

Things go on in our 'plant' despite the pandemic, thanks to Chris Janes and his crew. The work on the Corydon side stairwell has stalled because of transportation of materials snafu's. But the yard work on the south side of the church is almost complete. We wait for the sod to finish it. The fire escape on the north wall of the Ed Centre has been cleaned and painted. Some of the exterior of our building has been power washed. The linoleum floors beneath the pews in the church are currently in process of being stripped and rewaxed.

You may have noticed that construction goes on in earnest on Corydon! Occasionally it has been an adventure finding my way to the parish and then finding a parking spot! I have been consoled this past week to have some parishioners at some of the weekly Masses. I look forward to the time we can have more than 25 present and when we can have a congregation at the Sunday Mass! But like all of us have discovered, we simply have to be in "playing it by ear" mode of existence. Difficult times, but as I commented in a previous reflection: "in true St Ignatius fashion we will get through". Trials and tests can hone our spirit and will be the source of many blessings. Let's keep looking for those blessings as we carry on with good will and patience.

Blessings on everyone.



R. Frank Albright S.J.



St. Ignatius Parish