This fifth Sunday of Lent marks the last weekend before Holy Week and our observance of the deepest and most important mysteries of our faith in Jesus Christ—His saving Passion, Death and Resurrection.

It is really impossible for me to describe how different this Lent has been for the St. Vincent’s Priests and Staff, as we have had to adjust day by day to circumstances that were unthinkable just a short time ago.

I am deeply grateful for the heroic work of Fr. Jay, who has pioneered with Andy Dailey and Tom Schuerman the tech updates for our “virtual” ministry through social media. Thanks to the skilled camerawork of Paula Brandt and the adapted music programming of Tony Andorfer, assisted by his wife Marie and cantors Becca Weber and Tori Smead, our daily and Sunday Masses are viewed by folks far and wide. Our homes are becoming more truly what the Lord has intended them to be all along—sanctuaries of prayer and contemplative reflection.

I am also thankful to the office staff of St. Vincent’s, who continue to field the daily flow of inquiries and new outreach challenges. Dorothy Schuerman is working with our seminarians in working out a way to attempt to contact all of the 3,600 families of our Parish to create contact networks so that no one is left isolated in need. So many people have volunteered to drive people who need it to get groceries or go to a medical appointment. Fr. Eric is daily at the hospital in pastoral ministry to the sick.

Work continues on the Oratory of St. Mary Magdalene, whose interior woodworking should be completed in the next several weeks. As Providence would have it, both the number and positioning of the workers in the Oratory are, even under ordinary circumstances, adapted nicely to the appropriate social distancing that helps safeguard health.

Regarding the liturgies of Holy Week, Bishop Rhoades has helpfully provided us with guidance on the details of celebrating these days of prayer within the limitations mandated by the State to protect us. We at St. Vincent’s will live-stream and record all of these liturgies so that we can follow the Lord from our homes in the keeping of His Passion, Death, and Resurrection. Even though the church will not be open during the times of filming, we are united in spirit more deeply than ever.

Bishop Rhoades has asked that we join him for a diocesan-wide Stations of the Cross led by him which will be live-streamed on Friday, April 3, at 7:00 PM. Please join in this great prayer which our whole Diocese will offer up to the Lord for an end to the coronavirus epidemic, relief for those who are afflicted, and eternal salvation for those whom the Lord has called to Himself.

Finally, thank you for continuing to support the work of the Lord at our Parish through on-line giving, text-to-give, or simply mailing in your contribution. Your sacrificial gift is vitally important and needed now more than ever. It is the charism of our Parish to rise to the occasion when the necessities of life are most pressing, and your generosity never fails. These days are a great experiment of love, in which the good spreads faster and farther than any virus. We remain in it to win it, especially in light of the graces of Easter joy to come.

In St. Vincent’s love of Christ,

Fr. Daniel Scheidt
March 29, 2020