March 18, 2020

Dear Members of the Holy Family Parish Community:

When I boarded the plane to leave for the Priest Institute in Rome in January, I would never have imagined the events that took place over the past months. The Institute provided an opportunity for prayer, spiritual growth, continuing education, and fellowship with priests from different parts of the world. I am honored to have been given this opportunity in my priesthood. I want to assure you that you were in my prayers often. We began with Mass at the altar by the tomb of St. Peter. I offered that Mass for each of you and your families and I continued to offer many other Masses praying for you.

I wanted to thank each of you for your prayers for me. The restrictions that were imposed in Italy because of the Coronavirus brought the program to an early end. With the help of your prayers, I was able to change the date of my return flight. I arrived back to the United States on Friday,

March 13th. Following the directions of my doctor, I began a self-quarantine for two weeks; I assure you I feel healthy, I just need to follow the directives. I long to be with you for Holy Week as planned.

I deeply appreciate the commitment and work of Deacon Torres, Fr. Walter, Fr. Imre, together with the staff and leadership of the parish in my absence. May God bless each of them and their families!

Yesterday, we received word that Bishop Checcio has temporarily suspended all weekday and Sunday public Masses in the presence of the lay faithful in the Diocese of Metuchen until Friday, April 3rd. A copy of his letter is available on our website.

In view of this development, please be advised that all daily and weekend Masses will be said privately until we receive further communication from the Diocese. Mass intentions will be applied. We enjoin all to be with us in a spirit of prayer from your home. Perhaps you could set a small prayer table in your home; include a family bible, a cross that has a special significance. Other objects could be a statue of Mary or a rosary. The daily scripture readings and other prayer resources could be found on the computer at [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org) as well as other websites.

We hope to offer live streaming so that you can participate in our Sunday worship remotely online in your homes. Exact details are not available at this time. Please follow our website and Facebook page for the details in the upcoming days.

Lent reminds us of this and draws us closer to Him through our sacrifices. We did not know what sacrifices this Lent would bring as we began this season. While our culture might be using the term “social distancing,” by our prayers and works of charity, practice an intense prayerful spiritual unity at this time.

With my prayers,

Fr. Ryan