

Column042620

Companions on the Journey

April 26, 2020

Dear Friends,

Our quarantining has lasted for a long time and I know that I am beginning to sense some changes happening within me. Before I go into that topic in more depth please allow me a word of thanks to all of you. You have been so supportive during these trying times. So many of you have increased your personal prayer time each day. Many are tuning in to the daily celebrations of Eucharist. Many have carved out increased prayer time in your daily routine and the blessings are evident.

Financially we have been receiving contributions via E-giving and via envelopes dropped off or sent into the Pastoral Center. I am grateful. You should know that Saint Anthony's has applied for and received a Small Business Administration loan through Ambler Savings Bank. It covers both parish payroll and Child Care payroll for two months along with certain medical benefits and utilities etc. The parish received over \$70,000 and the PreK Child Care Program about \$175,000. Ambler Savings could not have been more helpful and the funds have already been moved into our account. We will be able to pay staff, teachers and aides through mid-June from these funds and use your contributions to pay ordinary parish payables. God has blessed us in so many ways. I am most grateful.

Returning to my opening comments. I have sensed a certain reticence or tentativeness or slight dip in confidence in me about going out into the "real world" to do errands or basic shopping or prescription runs. I believe that there will be a residual effect in many of us along these same lines the longer the sequestration lasts. It begins to affect the way we think and see things. Just the usual confidence with which we live our lives and go about our business can be pretty significantly affected by this isolation and the "not-knowing" and the anxiety about the future and whether we will make it through all of this.

I find that I am very much still a man of hope. I do not use the word "optimistic" in terms of my viewpoint. The reason is that word seems to convey something that begins and ends in me. I use the term hope because that begins and ends in the Lord. He is always our best and only reason for hope. There is nothing happening—overall or individually—that the Lord does not know about and care deeply about. His transforming grace is everywhere evident throughout this crisis in our country and our world. His transforming grace is available to us even in our need. Especially in our need. Do not be afraid to ask for help. Do not be afraid to offer help. In whatever way you can. God will be at work in and through the decisions we make and the things that we do.

Let us continue to pray for each other, and for our country and our world, for our Church and our parish. Let us pray for the grace that the Lord's hope and the Lord's confidence will always find a place within us.

Peace,

Monsignor McHenry