

Monday, March 23, 2020

Dear Faithful and Friends of Transfiguration Church,

Out of crisis comes need. As a nation, as a community, as a parish, as families and individuals we face a crisis. The invisible virus, COVID-19, threatens our health and wellbeing. We are encouraged to physically distance ourselves by staying home and by social distancing, staying at least six feet apart, to help prevent the spread of this virus and ensure our health. This is contrary to what we normally experience. We are social beings and thrive by interacting with one another.

In fact, today, the Governor has called us to shelter in place. This makes even the easiest tasks difficult; going to the grocery store, picking up medicines, getting a cup of coffee, especially for those who are elderly or have underlying health issues. For those who are able to get out, it becomes incumbent upon them to lend a hand.

We just have to think of new ways to reach out, help each other, and continue with our daily lives.

I have been thinking over the past few days as to what Christ would have told his followers if they were faced with a similar situation. It occurred to me that perhaps they did. Did the people not 'social distance' from the lepers? Were they not fearful? However, what Christ did was dispel the societal fear by healing the lepers, though only one returned to give him glory and offer him thanksgiving. Christ healed the sick providing for them and helping them with their feelings of isolation and disdain.

We must look to each other and care for one another. We cannot allow ourselves to feel isolated. We cannot think of ourselves as the ones who have little worth. We have tools today that the early Christians did not. We have telephones and computers to reach out to one another. We are able to travel distances quickly to provide for the needs of each other. So in this time of Great Lent, though we may be experiencing it differently, we must now follow the One who offered Himself for us and offer our time and talents for others. It is time to focus on works of charity and prayer.

Here are a few ways you can help:

- **Make phone calls.** Are you interested in calling others in the parish to help everyone stay in touch? We are organizing a team to make calls to others in the parish to stay to help stay connected. Interested in helping: Contact Fr. Tom ([frtom@transchurch.org](mailto:frtom@transchurch.org) or 603-930-7333)
- **Are you still able to get out and run some errands?** From time to time, someone might need an errand run, to the pharmacy or grocery store. Though we are under a shelter in place order, essential needs can still met and we can help.
- **Temporarily out of work?** If you are one of the many who may be in this category and are in need of confidential assistance, contact Fr. Tom.
- If you are able and would like **to offer assistance to others through the Transfiguration Charitable Fund**, please contact Fr. Tom or send your donation to the church or make it online. Your donations allow us to help.
- **Continue to financially support the parish.**
  - Since we are not able to gather for Sunday services our offering basket is empty and your candles have not been lit.
  - There are two ways to make donations.
    - Continue to **mail** your donations to the Church.
    - Make your **donations online**. You can make a stewardship donation, general donation, Charitable Fund donation or make a donation in the Offering Basket. Go to [transchurch.churchgiving.com](http://transchurch.churchgiving.com). You can make one-time donations or recurring donations via electronic bank account withdrawal or credit/debit card. This service is encrypted and secure.

*(Yesterday, I realized I couldn't make my weekly donation, so I went online to make my weekly offering. I chose to have the donation taken from my checking account to save the parish some fees. It took only a minute and was very easy.)*

- **Donate Blood.** This may seem a bit strange, but needs for blood continue throughout the United States. Before the crisis we had made contact with the American Red Cross to set up a regular Blood Drive at the Outreach Center. Our plan was to hold one quarterly. With the dramatic changes due to COVID-19, thousands of blood drives have been canceled throughout the United States. The Red Cross has asked to use our facilities twice monthly. The first Blood Drive is on April 1<sup>st</sup>.



*Give blood.*  
Every 2 seconds someone  
in the U.S. needs blood.  
**American Red Cross**

**Lowell Community  
Blood Drive**

**Wednesday, April 1, 2020  
11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

**Transfiguration Outreach Center/Club Lafayette Hall  
465 Fletcher Street  
Lowell, MA 01854**

For an appointment, please visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org)  
Or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

1-800-RED CROSS | 1-800-733-2767 | [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) | Download the Blood Donor App  
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