

Dear St. Ann family of Faith,

I pray that you and your loved ones are healthy and experiencing a deepening of Christ's love for you as we journey through Advent together. As we experienced during the Easter season, we are asked to hunker down to serve the common good amidst the pandemic. This is once again a time to consider our need for spiritual unity and the needs of Christian family of faith here at St. Ann.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic most of our in person devotional gatherings have been affected at St. Ann we were blessed with several ways we were able to unite in prayer and devotion. We hope and pray we can resume soon after this cloud over us is dissipated!! Most importantly I am writing to you today, as we prepare to celebrate the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, **I invite you to join your St. Ann family for Mass** – invite a friend too, either in person or virtually via livestream or Drive in, where you will receive communion in your car after attending the Mass via a transmitter on car-Radio. **This Drive-in Mass will be at 4:00pm, on December 24th.2020** in our parking lot. We will have both inside Church service and will broadcast mass via transmitter to your car Radio. We will have Eucharistic ministers come to you outside during communion time. Register online to attend Christmas Masses on our website: <http://saintanncatholicparish.com/>. **You can also register by calling the Church phone {708-8956700} starting today.** Remember to leave your name and number when you call.

I am writing also to appeal to your usual generous heart during this year's Christmas season. We are certainly fewer than we have always been. That means to double our effort. The contributions of parishioners at Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Masses constitute a sizable portion of our annual budget, which funds vital ministries for our parish. Our biggest pastoral ministry as a Parish here at St. Ann is supporting our catholic School. These Children in this our school are formed not only for the future of the Catholic presence here at St. Ann, but most of all we form adult Catholics of tomorrow for the world. Other liturgical ministries are affected too when we can't get funds to support those who run them. Limited attendance and offertory collections at Christmas Masses will undoubtedly place a significant financial strain on all our ministries and operations. Your generosity through the pandemic has been incredibly appreciated and I invite you to share what you are able this Christmas to ensure that our parish ministries and operations can continue into the new year 2021. Please know that we remain extremely prudent with our funds and have made some difficult decisions to maintain critical areas of service.

Please consider giving online at: <https://www.givecentral.org/location/100> where you can make a weekly and/or Christmas offertory contribution to our St. Ann family and keep the vital ministries and services we provide going. We ask you to prayerfully consider giving at the level you provided last year or even increasing it in thanksgiving for blessings received.

If you prefer to make an offertory donation through cash or check, our parish offices will be open Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 4:00pm and someone will be available to assist you. I also invite you to give of your time to the extent you are able. We are in need of additional volunteers to assist with Masses given the need to register, usher and disinfecting our pews between Masses, thus ensuring everyone's safety. To volunteer, please kindly call 708-895-6700, we will call you back with details if you leave a message.

As I mentioned at the beginning of the pandemic, I believe we are being called by Jesus Christ to a renewed sense of solidarity. This is a time for unity in prayer, not for isolation; it is a time for hope, not despair; it is a time for generosity, not self-focus. **“This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (Jn. 13:35).**

May the Prince of Peace grant you His peace and may He continue to manifest His love and presence to you in abundant ways.

Thank you for your continued support of our St. Ann family. Wishing you a blessed Advent and a Merry Christmas, I remain sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Mark Kalema, Pastor.