

# ST. GERTRUDE THE GREAT NEWSLETTER

## HOLY WEEK 2020 No. 200

ST. GERTRUDE THE GREAT BISHOP'S APOSTOLATE • 4900 RIALTO ROAD • WEST CHESTER, OHIO  
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### FROM BISHOP DOLAN

My dear Friends,

This has been quite a Lent. I'm glad we prepared for it well with a devout Septuagesima. That week we conducted devotions and sang a Solemn Mass in honor of Our Lady of Lourdes, Mary Immaculate, the Health of the Sick. Quinquagesima Sunday is an ancient feast of the Holy Face, a powerful and consoling devotion of reparation but also of petition "to settle the affairs of our household." Little did we know.

The holy forty days fast of Lent commenced with another Solemn Mass on Ash Wednesday. They say the penances God chooses for us are always better than those we choose for ourselves. May His holy will be done.

The Holy Ghost enabled us prudently to gather the children together just before things got too bad, for our annual Children's Day of Recollection. A solid fifty young ones, mostly from our school or home school families, assisted at spiritual talks, Rosary, Way of the Cross, Holy Mass and Confession. The little ones got a story from the Bishop. A few days later, the panic began.

Father Cekada returned home from an extended hospital stay on St. Valentine's Day. These weeks since brought seeming progress and then setbacks, with some heavy crosses for our dear Father; worry, preoccupation for all of us. Then the Panic Pandemic broke, terrorizing many of our faithful into staying home, and slowly draining our church of its Sunday attendance.

Through a seeming miracle, as of this writing on March 31, the churches in Ohio have not been closed. But thanks to media and government propaganda, most people, even our Catholics, even some clergy, believe the official line and are strictly self policing. But couldn't you die buying gas or lining up at Kroger? Eventually we were obliged to close our school, but the ladies of the school choir are keeping up beautifully the daily webcast high Masses so far. The servers have been good as gold as well. In the midst of all the crises, we had a wonderful "Altar Boys Day" for them on the last Saturday of March.

But on the preceding Saturday we buried our longtime and loyal acolyte, master of ceremonies and head of our servers, Richard VandeRyt, who directed just about every major service for about as long as anybody can remember. This too was a great loss, a heavy cross. Our consolation is that although Richard's death was so sudden, it was also well provided.



*Despite the government's many impediments thrust before the clergy and faithful wishing to assist at holy Mass, Bishop Dolan, his priests, and his flock at St. Gertrude the Great managed to assemble for the annual feast day Mass of St. Joseph, Protector of Holy Church, on March 19th. Hot cross buns were blessed and food for the needy was collected in his honor.*

Richard was at Mass and the Sacraments the very morning he died.

Our Lent continues. Should God allow it, we mean to continue public Masses at church for the few still brave enough to come despite the enormous, and frightening pressure. In addition, faithful throughout the world, deprived of Mass, now follow our webcast. You may access on our website the Sunday Sermons for Lent III, IV, and Passion Sunday to hear our thoughts and guidance at this critical time for our Church and our country.

The cross casts a heavy shadow, it is true, but its sweet shade refreshes and strengthens those who draw near. Study, inform yourself, but most of all *pray* these days, pray as you never have before, but with great calm. "In His will is our peace," as the Poet said. The Lent God chooses for us is always the best one.

With my prayers at Passiontide for every blessing this Easter,

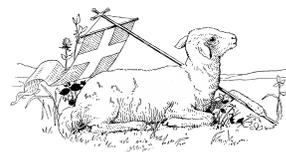
– Most Rev. Daniel L. Dolan



*(From top left) The annual Children's Lenten Day of Recollection was attended by fifty plus of our youth at St. Gertrude the Great on March 11th. All our clergy were able to participate in the offering of spiritual conferences, confessions, a sung Mass, the recitation of a meditated Rosary, Stations of the Cross, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The following week we honored great St. Patrick with a solemn high Mass and a luncheon for all our Irish and those who wish they were.*

## *Easter Novena of Masses*

Remember your loved ones during Easter Week in a *Novena of Masses* beginning **Easter Sunday, April 12th**, at St. Gertrude the Great Church.



*Please use the enclosed form to list your intentions.*