

From the Desk (Isolation Man Cave) of Fr. Joe

Ah, dear brothers and sisters,

How I wish that I could talk to you face to face. But that is not to be with my continuing rehabilitation and the continuing pandemic precautions. So, I thought that it would be good to communicate with you again by mail regarding my present level of healing and hope.

With my last visit for chemotherapy in August, Dr. Castro, after evaluating the evidence, informed me that I was not to have chemo that day, since “there is no more cancer present.” Needless to say, I don’t remember much after that. Thank God for Joanne DeSerio, my “personal” nurse. She heard the rest, which, by the way, was just as good. It did call for follow up with need for radiation. That began on August 31st and will continue on weekdays for five and a half weeks! So, I’m still under quarantine!

During this time of rehabilitation and restrictions, I’ve become more and more aware of how important you have been in my life. Your constant cards, notes and reflections lift me up and give me hope and courage to continue until that day, coming soon, when we can all be together in the church. I realize, too, that many of you are also housebound by rule or by caution. I encourage you to remain hopeful in your situation, as did St. Peter and St. Paul when jailed in Rome. They continued to share the gospel message of hope and love with their fellow Christians. You can do that by your prayers and notes and calls to friends that you are not able to be with physically. I can guarantee that it will lift them up and make them feel appreciated in their isolation.

Fr. Timothy and Fr. Stan keep me apprised of the progress of the parish in its mission, and Fr. Timothy, especially, keeps me connected by his recording of my weekend message on our Facebook page. He is quite the innovative friar and very faithful. I must also thank the office staff, Maryellen, Leslye, Edita, Joanne, Keith and our volunteers who keep the warmth of the parish alive with their pleasant greetings and assistance, and especially those who keep the daily and weekend liturgy alive. And I especially thank you for your consistent financial support during this time of separation. Your faithful support enables us to “pay our bills,” and helps me to focus on healing and gaining strength, and not on worry. I deeply appreciate you for that and encourage you to keep up the generous spirit of giving, both financially and in prayer. Please, also, remember your commitment to the CFA. It is our contribution to help the Bishop to “pay his bills” for the Diocese. Please be as generous as possible.

I would love to set a date for my physical return in the Church, but that will be determined by my health care people and the safety from the dangers of Corvid-19. Right now, Bishop Dewane has, for your health concern and safety, extended the non-obligation of Sunday attendance at Mass, so we will also take that into consideration.

I encourage your continued prayers for me, as I promise my continued prayers for you. And I certainly look forward to that day when we are all together in the Church for a wonderful reunion. God love you and protect you from all harm.

Your brother in isolation,

Fr. Joe