

Special Emergency Easter Message from Superior General of The Josephite Fathers

Dear Friends of Christ,

This year we commemorate a Triduum and Easter like none other. As we prepare to unite our shared Lenten observances in recognition of the glorious resurrection of our Risen Savior, we cannot help but make a significant pause. A pause to observe the ravages of the unexplainable and uncontrollable virus, Covid -19. This serious pandemic has gripped the entire world and pounded us with extremely high rates of illness and death.

While this saddens so many of us, I must alert you to the troubling and disturbing ways in which this pandemic disproportionality affects our African- American Community. In regions around the country, the rates of infection are many times those of the general population. Many of us know personally someone who has been infected or who has succumbed to this virus. There are many debatable reasons as to why this is happening and addressing these factors should be of paramount importance once we reach the other side of this terrible pandemic.

The urgent concern at this moment is how to stop the spread of the virus. We must all play a role in stopping the spread. There are proven ways to curb the deadly effects of this pandemic. I offer brief recommendations that are shared by the Center for Disease Control.

Social Distancing

I suggest that we can be physically distant yet not socially distant. Being “**close but at a distance**”. Loving our neighbor and ourselves by being **close by being distant**. Loving them so much that we not to take a chance of infecting them or them living with the guilt of infecting us. I suggest using the many forms of communication to keep in touch, inter-act, play games and share meaningful experiences without being physically close. **Friends, this is working all over the world. Our community has so many gifts to offer the world and the gift of caring for family and loved ones is one we must lift in this difficult time.**

Easter ultimately is a story of **hope**, a story of *life over death*, a story of *light over darkness*. We will get through this. If the resurrection story reminds us of anything it should remind us that while Good Friday is painful, difficult, Easter reminds us of resurrection!

PRAYER TO ST. MARTIN FOR THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE DURING THE CORONA-19 PANDEMIC

Dear St. Martin, threatened by the Corona-19 virus, we seek your assistance. As a healer, you know that the best medicine is always trust in the Father's mercy. Nevertheless, as you provided natural remedies, may we follow the directives of our health care officials. Please call upon the Holy Spirit to protect those who are vulnerable, to cure those who are infected, and to welcome those who have already died into eternal life. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. AMEN.