



St Antoninus Church

THANKSGIVING HARVEST 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ: 11/6/20

"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (1 Thes 5:18)

The Covid 19 virus has impacted all of our lives in many profound ways. Some of us have lost loved ones, and haven't even been able to fully mourn in the company of family. For months parishioners were deprived of the sacraments - even during Holy Week & Easter Week. Many are still not able to come to church due to age and/or a medical condition. Family celebrations, weddings, birthdays, and anniversaries have been greatly reduced or canceled. The financial and emotional strains on all of us have been great as well. We are all trying to adjust as best we can. These adjustments came as a burden, and yet, with the eyes of faith, we see that they can also become something of a blessing.

In this time there is a great opportunity for us to simplify our lives and take stock of what is most important. A mystic once said: "The spiritual life is more about subtraction, than addition."

This is a time when we can see ourselves before our Sovereign God, and allow Him to purify and sanctify us, knowing that He is committed to completing what He has begun in us.

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. "

Romans 8:38-39

We have learned to adapt here. Within two weeks of the lockdown we were live streaming all of our Masses and soon added a daily Rosary conference call. As of June 1st we opened up for "in-person" Mass, and since then have become "fully functioning" both "in person" and through live streaming – thus reaching a far wider audience than we ever could have before.

Trusting in the Lord, and as God gives us capacity, we press on toward the future of this dynamic parish community. With this in mind we are preparing for our Thanksgiving Harvest 2020. Our main event will be on Sunday, November 22, beginning with Holy Mass at 10am, and followed by our virtual Harvest Bazaar via Zoom at 2 pm.

We've come a long way... St Antoninus was founded in 1875 by the Dominican Friars who with the generous support of God's people, built this beautiful parish and faithfully served here for 100 years. The 1960's and early 70's brought great decline in the parish. However, in 1975, under the leadership of Fr Jim Ferry, the parish was "born again" in the power of the Holy Spirit when the Charismatic Renewal took root here. Since then it has grown into a dynamic, unabashedly Catholic, culturally rich, family friendly community. Sunday Mass has lively Spirit-filled worship, but is also profoundly reverent. This combination of the Charismatic and the traditional, along with a strong sense of community draws people back each week from near and far.

Our mission: evangelization & discipleship through worship, preaching & teaching, community outreach, weekly prayer meetings, Eucharistic adoration, Bible studies, & monthly Healing Masses, as well as food and clothing distribution & one-on-one mentoring.

The Lord has allowed us to be fruitful in his Kingdom. Literally thousands of people from near and far have encountered the love of God and the power of the Holy Spirit here, whether through Sunday Mass, frequent Life in the Spirit Seminars, tent revivals or annual Charismatic conferences. In the past 45 years this little parish has helped produce 6 priests and 2 religious. I know, I am one of those 6 priests.

At this time of unprecedented challenges brought about by the pandemic - with God's blessings and your support - St Antoninus will continue this mission of bringing the Gospel to our broken world. Our Thanksgiving Harvest is our main fundraiser each year. Please consider being a part of the Lord's mission here at St Antoninus by becoming a benefactor, sponsor, or donor in our Thanksgiving Harvest 2020. The Main event will be on Sunday, November 22, beginning with Holy Mass (in-person & live streamed) followed by our on-line Harvest Bazaar extravaganza at 2pm.

We look forward to your presence and support. Thank you ahead of time. May the Lord God keep you in His care and abundantly bless you and all of your loved ones.

In Jesus thru Mary,

Fr Joseph