



St. Ignatius of Loyola
Roman Catholic Church and School
585 South Third Street
Rogers City, Michigan 49779-1911
Telephone: 989.734.2753; Telefax: 989.734.7671

Wednesday V in Lent

1 April 2020

Dearly Beloved of our Lord in His Agony:

We enter another difficult week in which we are not permitted by our temporal circumstances to assemble for the Eucharistic Synax, the Mass. Please know that I admire and learn from your care of your friends, relations and faith of your church and parish territory.

Thank you who have so thoughtfully bought or delivered groceries for people who are more vulnerable to exposure to COVID-19, or checked on their well-being. Thank you for praying for your parishioners, for leaders and health care professionals and their auxiliaries, and even for me. Thank you who have continued, according to your means and practicality, to support the costs of your families and parish to operate with readiness for our return to worship God and serve each other. Thank you.

This period of Lent, also known as the Passiontide. In the first four weeks, we were called to be reconciled anew to our heavenly Father through the sacrament of Penance. We turned with converted hearts made joyful by Christ's absolution of our sins. We are grateful for the Holy Spirit's gift of peace through the sacrament of Penance. In these latter two weeks, we consider with wonder and gratitude the source of the effectiveness of the Sacrament of Penance: the work Jesus did for the glory of the Father through his Paschal or Passover Mystery of Christ's life, death, and resurrection. Before Christ's Paschal Mystery, people he meant to serve rejected him. After the first four weeks of Lent, we hope we are now ready to individually show Jesus the reception and adoration he deserves as our loving and crucified Lord and Good Shepherd, our *Pastor Bonum*.

Here I share with you some quotations, with Scripture references, from Thomas à Kempis' fourteenth century work, *The Imitation of Christ* (Brooklyn: Confraternity of the Precious Blood, 1954, 1982), to this day a spiritual resource for persons seeking a life of deeper personal union with Christ. I think he can help us address our hunger for the Eucharist as we await our next reception of his Body.

From Book IV, Chapter 13 §1: *The disciple says to her Lord:* Who will give me, O Lord, that I may find Thee alone, and that I may open my whole heart to Thee, and enjoy Thee as my soul desireth; and that now no man may despise me (Songs 8:1), nor anything created move me or regard me, but that Thou alone speak to me, and I to Thee, as the beloved is wont to speak to his beloved, and a friend to entertain himself with his friend (Exodus 33:11). This I pray for, this I desire that I may be wholly united to Thee, and may withdraw my heart from all created things, and by the Holy Communion, and often celebrating [it], may more and more learn to relish heavenly and eternal things.

From Book IV, Chapter 14 §1-2: *The disciple says to her Lord:* O true ardent faith [of the devout persons who have been, out of a vehement desire of Communion and sensible love in their hearts], argument of Thy sacred presence! For they truly know their Lord in the breaking of the bread, whose heart burneth so mightily within them, from Jesus walking with them (Luke 24:35).

From Book IV, Chapter 15 §3: *The Lord says to his disciple:* Whosoever, therefore, with a single heart shall direct his attention upwards to God, and purify himself from all inordinate love or dislike of an created thing, shall be the most fit to receive grace, and worthy of the gift of devotion (Matthew 6:22). For the Lord bestows His blessing there where He finds the vessels empty. And the more perfectly one forsakes [the] things below, and the more he dies to himself by the contempt of himself, the more speedily grace cometh, entereth in more plentifully, and the higher it elevateth the free heart. *Then shall he see and abound; his heart shall wonder and be enlarged* (Isaiah 60:5)

United with you in our Sacred Head and His Dolorous Mother,
Rev. Father Rolando Silva,

Parish Priest