



May 18, 2020

My dear friends,

*This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad. Alleluia! Alleluia!*

This phrase has always been my clarion call throughout the Easter season. I have used it each week for years to welcome my parishioners, to invite them to join me in celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus, to help them respond to Jesus' call to live out the Easter message day in and day out. It has always been a reminder that we are an Alleluia people!

This year I have once again made the call, but in a very different way. These present 50 days, leading to Pentecost in less than two weeks, have been marked by unprecedented suffering as we have fallen victim to Covid-19.

In addition to the threats to our physical well-being, we are suffering spiritually as the pandemic has required restrictions of our worship and active participation in the sacramental life of the Church. They come in response to an extreme medical emergency as federal and local authorities fulfill their responsibilities to safeguard human life and the common good.

We all have been practicing good citizenship. We are advocates for justice and charity as we comply with their regulations. From the pages of Scripture we learned that we are indeed "our brother's keeper." We are called to sacrifice and to cooperate with public safety norms, given our reverence for life and human dignity.

The good news is that a plan for a gradual reopening of our churches has now taken shape. Mayor Bowser wisely has said that DC is not yet ready to reopen. However the Archdiocese has developed a reopening plan for its churches. We want to be ready when the Mayor gives us the go-ahead. I am thrilled that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. I can't wait to welcome you – of course, at a distance! The day will come when I can actually give you that hug. But not yet! Soon I will at least be able to wave, to smile, and to join you in celebrating the Eucharist. What a thrill that will be! That will indeed be the day the Lord has made!

In the meantime, there is a lot of work to do. The Archdiocesan guidelines will help us to prepare to reopen our cathedral church in a safe manner for the public celebration of the Mass. Before that happens I will need to ensure that we can follow the safety directives. These guidelines depend heavily on staff and volunteers to carry out the needed social spacing and cleaning protocols. I will be calling on you and I know I can count on your support and cooperation.

In a separate letter I will talk about some of the guidelines developed by the Archdiocese. For now I quote from Archbishop Gregory's conclusion to his letter to the priests: "Devoting ourselves with one accord to prayer together with our Blessed Mother Mary, the apostles and all the martyrs and saints, as we await the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (cf. Acts 1:14), let us prepare to confidently go and serve the spiritual needs of the flock that has been entrusted to us. May our Risen Lord bless you with his peace throughout the Easter and Pentecost seasons and always."

My dear friends, stay safe, take care, and God bless. Let us rejoice. That special day is near!! Oh how I look forward to saying "Welcome back. I have so missed you!"

Your brother in Christ,

Rev. Msgr. W. Ronald Jameson  
Rector