Dear Parishioners and Friends,

I read the other day that worst investment you could have made in 2019 was buying a 2020 calendar planner. Since our world has been turned upside down these past two months there is no question in my mind that the near future will be the same. As we begin to open up facilities and businesses the question is being asked, “What about our Church?” We will follow the guidelines of the Archdiocese of Washington and Washington DC Government. I along with most people wish for you to comfortably gather together in worship and fellowship. Your spiritual and physical well-being is of great concern to me. So over the next couple of weeks please do not give into the temptation to abandon your own safety and that of others.

A blessed Mother’s Day to all those who have shared the gift of life and those who have blest children with a mother’s-like care, this would include all those who have nurtured or provided for children in any way. I recently watched a movie, Children of Men, where women had become infertile the world over and there had not been a child born in 18 years. In the midst of a world at war and filled with strife it is the cry of an infant that brought a moment of tranquility and many people sought just to touch this infant. Motherhood is a blessed vocation and it is filled with elation, expectations, sacrifices and sorrows. To moms everywhere and in whatever form it has taken in your life, thank you and Happy Mother’s Day.

So often when we think of Church we center our thoughts on buildings or the magisterium, the teaching authority of the Church. But at its foundational moment the Church was the gathering of the people who called themselves believers in “the Way.” The way was to follow in the footsteps of Christ. It was to believe in Him as the truth and the life.

Looking at the first Letter of Saint Peter. We hear, “let yourselves be built into a spiritual house.” We imitate Christ the cornerstone upon which the people of God bind themselves to enter into a relationship with Christ. We are one with our God and whoever believes in Christ will never be put to shame. Our destiny is to follow Christ and believe in Him. He has called us out of the darkness of sin into his wonderful light which is life with Christ.

As we live out this relationship we find ourselves sharing Christ with others by words and actions. The early church found themselves neglecting some of the followers of Christ. We have a tendency to be prejudice toward those who are not “like us.” This seems to be rooted in ignorance. Sometimes in a refusal to learn or sometimes out of the fear of what it calls us to change in our lives. Each of us at all times need to do an examination of our conscience. Are we limiting the spread of the Gospel in not being open to serving people in new ways? In the early church it was the Hebrews towards the Hellenists. Once this was recognized a solution was found to address this sin. The formation of the Diaconate was instituted to meet the physical and spiritual needs of the Greeks who believed in Christ. Today, Permanent Deacons, such as our Deacon Bill perform similar actions of reaching out through works of charity and prayer to serve the needs of the people of God. And for the early Church, “the word of God spread, the numbers of disciples increased, and a large number of priests were becoming obedient to the faith.” Is this not what the Lord wants for us today?

As we come to the Gospel of John, in Jesus’ final discourse He says, “Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?” In very clear language Jesus is telling us that He and the Father are one. One in Being, in union with the Holy Spirit. All is so perfect. God so loves us that He sends his only Son, who sacrifices Himself for us, conquering sin and death and by being raised shows us the way to eternal life. In response we gather together as a people who share this Good news in word, sacrament and ministry to others; who confess our sins and repent and do the work of God. We organize ourselves into a community of believers to reach out in various and wondrous ways to make Christ visible so all may come to believe in Him as the Way, the Truth and the Life. This is the Church: as Cardinal Avery Dulles expressed it: She is Mystical Communion, Sacrament, Servant, Herald, Institution, and Community of Disciples. We call upon Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church to intercede with Her son for us. It is in His Father’s house that He will provide a home for us. Amen