

My dear Parishioners of Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish,

There is much to be said about the mighty power of God. God's power is awesome in-and-of itself and transcendent beyond our control. Although we can plainly read for ourselves the power of even God's word in creation in the Book of Genesis, Saint Paul tells us in the Book of Hebrews that God created by His word (Hebrews 11:3), He preserves creation by His word (Hebrews 1:3) and will consummate creation by His word (Hebrews 12:26).

God also demonstrates His power through others showing us not only His might, but also His collaboration with us in His desire to help us regain what we had lost through sin. We can look to so many examples such as Moses and the separation of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:21-31), David and Goliath (1 Samuel 17), and Elisha and the invisible Army of the Lord (2 Kings 6:16-17) just to name a few.

Ultimately however, when God's plan came to fruition in order to save us from our sins and He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ as our Redeemer, His power was also evident. We know that Jesus had the knowledge, power, and ability to heal the sick (Luke 4:40), cure the lame (John 5:1-47), master nature (Mark 4:35-41), and raise the dead (John 11:38-44). It is important to note that in every instance that Jesus heals, He is in direct proximity to the person (except in very specific instances) or the event. This deserves our utmost attention and reflection. The same God (Jesus, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity) who created the universe, could easily display His might and power and wipe the ills of humanity away in an instant. And yet, He chooses that *His healing power comes to us through His healing touch*, and His desire to be close to us.



Mark 10:46-52

Jesus Touches the Blind Man Bartimaeus and Heals Him

very lifeblood of your connection to Jesus Christ and the nearness of physicality that Our Lord intended in the sacraments that He Himself instituted.

My friends, the precautions that come with this very unique time of pandemic are certainly needed: social distancing, masks, limiting capacities of indoor gatherings, the obligation to attend Mass being lifted, etc. However, human nature can also draw us into complacency over time. To forget the need to attend Mass in person versus online, to receive the Eucharist in a state of grace and to gather as a community of worshippers (the *ecclesia*), to receive the forgiveness of sins in the sacrament of reconciliation or the anointing of the sick when needed. The sacramental life of the Church and the communal life of the Faithful are the

With this in mind, I encourage you take every opportunity to return to the regular reception of the Sacraments and in-person Mass. Of course, and I stress, this is not a call to disregard your health or your own personal decisions on what is right for you at the moment or the guidance from the proper health authorities. It is a call however, that as things either now or in the future, do begin to get better, to not forget the importance of being close to Jesus, not just in thought, prayer, or metaphorically, but most importantly physically and sacramentally.

Know that your health and safety, as well as your peace and happiness are in my daily prayers and Masses, and I ask for your prayers as well. I miss you all and look forward to a time, soon, when we can see each other once again – not in the new normal ... but in the old normal! *“Alleluia! The Lord has risen! He has risen indeed!”*

Sincerely yours in the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,

Rev. Christopher S. Butera

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Pastor