



Getting Vaccinated

Everyone asks me, “Have you been vaccinated yet?” I am sure you hear that same question. I received my second shot of vaccination on Ash Wednesday. Being 78 years old and being a public minister helped put me in sooner for an appointment. I hope all of you will be able to be vaccinated soon. But today I want to talk about a different kind of vaccination. It is a spiritual vaccination. I refer to our annual Easter duty. Church law requires every Catholic to receive the Eucharist at least once between the beginning of Lent and the end of the Easter Season, Pentecost Sunday. If an individual is aware of mortal sin, there is of course an obligation to receive the sacrament of Penance before receiving Communion. I call the Easter Duty a spiritual vaccination because it is a bare bones minimum. The Covid vaccination, and our annual Flu vaccination, does not guarantee us good health. You still have to eat healthy and nutritious food in moderation and exercise appropriately for your age and state of health. Spiritually you still need daily prayer and Sunday Eucharist to stay healthy. We need a steady diet of reflecting on God’s Word in the Bible. We need the Eucharist to nourish us each week.

This year our archbishop has dispensed with the Easter duty. Cardinal Cupich did this not because we do not need our annual vaccination, but because he recognizes many people are still

uncomfortable going out in public, even if it is only to church. He does not want to put a burden on people, especially if there is a hardship involved. I hope these folks are trying to watch a televised Mass either on our website, or regular television. Cardinal Cupich offers Mass on Channel 7 at 9:30 every Sunday. You are encouraged to make a perfect act of Contrition in lieu of a sacramental confession, and an act of Spiritual Communion if you are unable to receive the Eucharist.

Let us be grateful for the sacraments. Pray we soon will be able to have everyone coming to church to celebrate our sacred mysteries. Pray our Covid vaccination will soon be available to all. Pray we may all receive our spiritual vaccinations as well. Also pray for Father Denis as he prepares for his retirement. And pray that we receive an outstanding new pastor.

Peace and love always,
Father Mike Ahlstrom

The Good Friday Regulations

Good Friday is a day of Fast and Abstinence.

Fasting means adults from 18 up to the age of 59 can have only one full meal and two light meals with no food between meals. Of course, those with health concerns are excused.

Abstinence means no meat for anyone over 14 years old.

The Good Friday fast and abstinence is different from Lent.

This is called the Paschal Fast and is a joyful anticipation before Easter. It is like being too excited to eat before your wedding, not just mourning the death of Jesus. We look forward to the joy of resurrection. While the requirement is only for Good Friday you are invited to extend it to include Holy Saturday.