

Dear Friends,

Today is Holy Thursday. This is the day we remember the last full day of Jesus' life on earth. It was on this evening, at His Last Supper, that He left His Church two great gifts: The Sacred Priesthood and the Holy Eucharist.

The gift of the Priesthood is a gift of service to the Church. The Priest is to act in the person of Christ, to be another Christ in loving service to His people. In the last two decades, we have been forced to confront the faults, failings, and sinfulness of those in the Priesthood. As we walk with Jesus this week we ask Him to help us to separate the individual priests and their shortcomings from the gift of the Priesthood itself. It is my hope and prayer that the current crisis will allow priests to show the real nature of the Priesthood: sacrifice, love, and service. I humbly ask for your prayers for all priests this day, that we may continue to seek to serve as the Lord calls us.

The Holy Eucharist is also a gift that calls us to service. In the liturgy this evening which commemorates the Last Supper, the Gospel reading is not about Jesus taking the bread and wine and changing it into His Body and Blood; rather, it is from St. John's account of the Last Supper and it is the story of Jesus washing the feet of His disciples and His telling them they must do the same. It is a reminder to us, who are a Eucharistic people, that we are called to humbly serve each other. As a Priest, I have been moved by parishioners' longing for the Eucharist during this time when we can't gather to celebrate. I just hope and pray that each of who long for the Eucharist realize we can still live out our calling by humble service and that we won't forget this when the crisis has passed. If we really lived out our Eucharistic calling, we could change the world.

You are all in my prayers on this special day; please pray for me and my brother priests.

In Christ, Fr. Caruso