

Dear Parishioners of Sacred Heart Church,

I was speaking to a woman from the parish who told me that the first time the Church was unlocked and she was able to enter and be with our Lord in prayer she barely made it to the end of the last pew where she knelt down and sobbed.

Do we remember where we were a year ago at this time? Masks everywhere? Limited seating in Church? Every other pew “ribboned” off? No Music or Offertory collection or procession of Gifts or Sign of Peace, departing quickly after Mass? Is that all?

Do we remember being together in prayer and worship, in Church or live-stream? Do we remember hearing the Scriptures proclaimed? Do we remember Jesus present in the Holy Eucharist? Do we remember our Shepherd finding us in the valley of darkness, leading us along the right paths, comforting and protecting us, spreading the table before us and dwelling with us in the House of the Lord?

Did we ever think that our holy, humble Church would become an “out-of-the-way” place where we could come and rest a while with our Loving Shepherd? Can we ever doubt that His Sacred Heart is always moved with pity for us? Yet, now that things are settling down and moving forward do we find that we are being tempted to follow “other” shepherds who “mislead and scatter the flock” When we once looked to our Church with such longing, do we now pass it by without a thought of going in to its peace and quiet? Do we no longer take the time to go to that “out-of-the-way” place in our homes or our hearts to meditate and pray? Are we back to eating once more in front of our computers, our TV’s, inside our cars? Schedules, even in the summer months, are getting busy. Days are filling up again with activities. Life is getting stressful. Is this the “normal” we want to get back to? Shhh... Do we hear the restful waters nearby? Do we see the verdant pastures? Do we smell the sumptuous banquet set on the table before us? Do we hear the voice of the Shepherd calling us to see His kindness, to taste His goodness, to dwell in His peace? Do we?

May the Lord refresh your soul this summer,

*Father John*