

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Happy Solemnity of St. Pius X, our parish patron St.! St. Pope Pius X's feast day is August 21, but we celebrate it as a solemnity today as a parish family. Over the past few years, we have celebrated this solemnity in conjunction with the opening of the school year's Mass of the Holy Spirit. We cannot be together today to celebrate in a typical way; yet this should in no way diminish how blessed we are to have been called by God to be a part of this amazing community of faith. A few months ago, I received a book called *Pope St. Pius X*, a gift from Dillon Stull, one of our Stanford University medical students. This book is a spiritual biography of the life of Giuseppe Melchior Sarto, the eldest of eight children in a very poor family. Sarto became a priest, Patriarch of Venice, then Pope Pius X and ultimately St. Pius X. I wish to share one reflection which encapsulates the reputation of this holy man.

"He had the greatest heart that it was possible for a human being to have,' was said of Pius X, not one but many times. Even for treachery he had no condemnation. A betrayal of trust which had affected him deeply came to his knowledge after the death of the culprit. Folding his hands he prayed silently for the departed soul. 'He is dead,' he said gently, 'may he rest in peace.' One more picture drawn from life. A young priest, tortured by doubts, knelt shaken with sobs at the Pope's feet. The white figure bent compassionately over the kneeling man, the strong and gentle hands of the Holy Father held the head of the supplicant closely to his heart. 'Faith, faith, faith,' repeated the ringing voice over and over again. 'Faith, my son, must be your place of refuge.'"

St. Pius X is also known as the Saint of the Eucharist. He had a great devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and it was he who lowered the age of First Holy Communion to include young children. The Church has so much for which to grateful through the ministry of this brilliant, compassionate, and loyal son of the Church. Let us renew in our own lives a more fervent devotion to the Eucharist, the source and summit of the Church. I would like to take this opportunity to thank many of you who joined with us in prayer during our recent Novena in honor of St. Pius X, dedicated to an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life and an end to the coronavirus pandemic. May we receive abundant graces to help us to grow in faith, love, hope, and charity most especially during this difficult time in the life of the Church and the wider community.

We welcome back our school community to a new academic year. I am very grateful for our principal, Mr. Marc Nava, vice-principal, Ms. Catie Costa and the faculty and staff of St. Pius Catholic School. They have worked tirelessly over the summer months to prepare for this new year. They have exhibited leadership, competence, patience and humility in the face of uncertainty and challenges. May this year bring many blessings to our children, their parents and families, and all who support this very important ministry of our parish. Please join me in honoring, praying for and supporting our faculty and staff: **Marc Nava, Catie Costa, James Brandt, Gena Pass, Marie Henderson, Catherine Hicks, Ash Srinivasan, Stephanie Haining, Denise Kirksey, Sandy Edens, Beck Ott, Gary Castelli, Amador Maldonado, Thomas Boles, Gerold Palisoc, Cathy Yee, Senora King, Kristin De Angelis, Jessica Cant, Julie Brand, Shelley Crueldad, Tammy Nurisso, Cheryl Raffetto, Annette Tabares, Monica Hird, Jocelyn Orozco, Meaghan Brennan, Jeanette Orozco, Megan Castelli, Ellie Han, Trevor Pickens, Tamara Jamali, Stanley Sherman and Judy Giacometti and Debbie Castelli (who provide administrative support for the school).** Through the intercession of St. John Baptist de la Salle, Patron Saint of teachers and schools, Pray for Us!

Once again, I cannot express more my thanks and gratitude for the many staff and parishioners who volunteered their time and talent as we hosted the ordination ceremonies here at St. Pius X over three successive Saturdays this month. I have received many messages of thanks from priests and laity from throughout the Archdiocese. It was indeed a signal grace to have been honored by our beloved Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone in this way. The technical support for live streaming is second to none!! The environment was dignified and added so much to these important liturgies in the life of the Archdiocese. The coordination of signing in visitors, setting up and breaking down, was simply extraordinary. I would like to thank Bob Sullivan who erected the special altar for use in our outdoor ordination ceremonies.

On this feast day, please know how proud I am to be your shepherd and father, along with Father Edgardo and Father Coleman. St. Pius X parish has a long and storied history; I pray that we continue to build upon this incredible legacy bequeathed to us by generations past. Let us remember in our prayers this day the pastors who have so lovingly and energetically served us: **Reverend Monsignor Michael Fitzsimon; Reverend Monsignor Peter G. Armstrong; Reverend James MacDonald; Reverend Paul Rossi**, as well as the many priests who served in parochial ministry, the Sisters of the Holy Cross and countless dedicated lay women and men who built this amazing place we call home!

Congratulations as well to our candidates for Confirmation who were confirmed in ceremonies here last Friday evening. It was wonderful to be together again for this very special milestone in the lives of our young people and their families. We were especially blessed to have Father Kyle return as he was instrumental in the formation of the candidates. Both he and Father Edgardo gave exceptional homilies and they assisted me in conferring the Sacrament of Confirmation, the first time for Father Kyle!! It was a great evening filled with love and hope and I pray the abundant grace and gift of the Holy Spirit will guide our young people into the future!

Father Tom