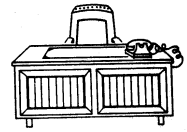


## 3rd Sunday of Lent

March 7, 2021



From the Desk of  
Fr. Romanus

Dear Parishioners,

This is our first bulletin in two weeks since our parish office building caught fire on Monday, February 15. The fire was a very devastating development that could not have come at a worst time. Like the rest of the world, we have been dealing with the challenges of the pandemic. This fire was like a double whammy no one could have seen coming. As people of faith, we trust that God will get us through these challenges.

The fire started in the south east corner of the second floor of the office building. You could imagine the shock of watching the thick dark smokes bellowing out of those windows. There was a feeling of helplessness and the fear of losing the building and everything in it. This horror scene could only be matched by the courage and determination of the brave firefighters doing their best to stop it. I watched as they climbed on top of the roof and started tearing up a section directly above the fire in a gallant effort to put out the stubborn fire. I prayed that the roof does not give in but also trusted their experience and expertise. Fortunately, their efforts paid off and we cannot thank them enough.

Despite their gallantry, the fire did plenty of damage to that section of the building on both floors. Some parts of the building had smoke and water damages. The damage on the roof is enough to warrant a new roof.

The good news in all this is that no one was hurt and no life lost. Properties could be fixed or replaced, but life has no duplicate albeit eternal life in heaven. We thank God that everyone is safe. This is another reminder that we cannot afford to take anything in life for granted. We ought to strive to do the most with the gift of life God has given us and resist the temptation of attachment to material stuff.

The other good news is that we have good insurance. The insurance company is working with us to take care of the damages. This will involve a gradual process of restoration until things are back to normal. Meanwhile, the parish offices will remain closed until they are considered safe to reopen. I ask for your continued understanding and cooperation as we strive to take care of the damages and return to normal.

In this Sunday's gospel, Jesus shows a rare expression of anger directed at those who abused the house of God. It was certainly out of character for an otherwise gentle and docile Jesus to be chasing out all who were abusing the house of worship. When they asked him for a sign underscoring his authority, he said, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." They thought he was out of his mind and wondered how he could possibly destroy in three days a temple that had been under construction for forty-six years. We are reminded that he was speaking about the temple of his body in reference to his death and resurrection.

For those dealing with the pain of losing a loved one and for all who are in the process of losing their lives, this gospel brings hope and comfort. Our faith in God and belief in the resurrection is a reminder that death does not have the final word. The life that truly matters is eternal life with God. For those dealing with other kinds of crisis in life, including the pandemic and the destruction of property, it points to the light at the end of the tunnel.

One of the ironies of life is that we are made stronger by the adversities we face. As they say, "what doesn't kill you only makes you stronger." We are stronger when we put our faith in God knowing full well that nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Have a great week!

*Fr. Romanus*