



# Saint Augustine Catholic Church

A STEWARDSHIP COMMUNITY

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*“What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?...No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us.”*  
*Romans, 8:35(a) – 37(c)*

March 19, 2020

Dear Community of St. Augustine:

As we unite as a Church and close the doors of our parish for public worship, the words of the apostle Saint Paul to the Romans come to my mind: “What will separate us from the love of Christ?”

In this effort to contain the spread of COVID -19, we need to practice social distances, avoid physical contact and be very careful with vulnerable people. Many questions arise, to which I, like you, have no answers. There is much uncertainty and fear of what may happen and how long it may last; but as Christians, I invite you to increase patience, maintain faith and strengthen confidence in Him who loved us first.

We cannot despair because God never abandons us. God was the first to close the gap, sending us His Son who became one like us to save us. Through Mary, God shortened the distance and united heaven with earth. Jesus stayed on the bread and wine to be close to us and feeds us spiritually. Through the Holy Spirit, God is with us to strengthen and enlighten us.

We, too can shorten distances, we can be united in prayer; we can be side by side with people who are alone in their house. Call them to find out how he or she is; we all know a parishioner in this situation. We can bridge the gap by communicating with those with whom we share the same ministry or parish group. I know that there are many WhatsApp groups, I urge you to share a prayer and a message of encouragement. We can shorten the time by doing what the health authorities tell us to end this pandemic.

Today in the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, husband of the Virgin Mary, I celebrated the first mass without the faithful. I offered today's mass for our world, for His Church, for our community and for the end of this disease.

In the second reading of this feast, taken from chapter 4 of the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans, we read how God fulfills his promises through faith, which is free gift. Abraham, Mary, and Joseph, all of them hoped against hope and trusted in the Lord. Let us follow their example.

May God protect us!

Fr. Tomas Hurtado  
Pastor