March 23, 2020

Dear Friends:

We find ourselves in difficult times. The pandemic confronting our community, our nation and the world has put us on uncertain footing. People are tired, frustrated, grieving and wondering when life will return to normal. I certainly find myself thinking of the writer of Psalm 13 when they said “How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?”

Friends, **God is with us.** Even in our deepest moments of anxiety and despair, **God is with us.** We see it in the actions of our friends and neighbors and by watching total strangers help one another through this difficult time. Above all, we see it directly here in our parish in the work of our outreach volunteers and their love and compassion for others. I want to assure you that even in these difficult times our help for the community continues, although in a slightly different form in the near term.

After prayerful conversation with Deanna Johnson and careful planning by her and our pantry volunteers, we are instituting a change in our pantry procedure. Beginning in April and continuing for the foreseeable future, **our pantry will be operating on an appointment-only basis for our existing clients.** In the coming days a small team of remote volunteers will be calling them to arrange specific pick-up times. At their scheduled time, our clients will drive to the pantry, stay in their vehicles, and Deanna will place their pre-packaged items directly in their trunks.

While not ideal and certainly different from our longstanding and loving tradition of welcoming people into the pantry and providing fellowship and support as they do their shopping, **our support continues.** We continue to live into our cherished role as those of whom Jesus spoke in Matthew 25: “I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

Thank you for your understanding and especially your continuing support of all we are blessed to serve through your financial gifts and prayers. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to email me at priest@cunninghamchapel.org or our outreach team at cccares@cunninghamchapel.org.

Blessings,

**Matt+**