

'I will not leave you orphans.'

62 Years ago, I was ordained at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Omaha Nebraska.

And I am still a priest of the Archdiocese of Omaha, although I live in Scottsdale Arizona.

I am grateful today for my path that has taken me to ten different Nebraska parishes. Every winter I still hear from the first bride I married in my first assignment at Hartington Nebraska--Mrs. Rollie Issom.

I am grateful for all the other splendid people I have encountered along my journey.

They have all blessed me more than any of them will ever know.

I have walked among "the Communion of Saints!"

Today in the **Gospel**, Jesus assures us "I will not leave you orphans."

In this time of social distancing, it is easy to feel like orphans.

And yet in a very real sense we are ALL TOGETHER in facing the same ordeal which is the pandemic.

Our sensitivity is sharpened by the realization that we all share the same human condition.

It is one of woundedness, either mental or physical, and we all need the balm and consolation of a successful vaccine.

We can bear one another's burdens or arm ourselves and march into the legislature, as has happened in Michigan.

But our assault weapons will not conquer the plague,

Wise leadership, valid science, and popular and enduring patience

are all needed.

And so we pray:

O God endow our nation's leaders with wisdom,

which is more valuable than gold.

Bless our scientists, and may they be honored

and not silenced nor discounted.

Have mercy on the unemployed.

Gird our care takers with courage and endurance.

and lift up the sick and the suffering.

Amen

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