

OFFICE of the ARCHBISHOP

ARCHDIOCESE OF LOUISVILLE

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The following personal letter from Archbishop Kurtz also is being mailed to all parishioner households throughout the Archdiocese.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

May God bless you! During these difficult days when so many are experiencing pain and strife due to the COVID-19 pandemic and to the sin of racism that pervades our culture, I am mindful of the promise of Pentecost: “Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love.” This promise occurred as people of many languages joined together – experiencing the miracles of both tongue and ear – as they responded to the invitation of the Holy Spirit to renew the face of the earth. I encourage you to read and reflect on the column about racism that I released in the June 11 edition of *The Record* and on my blog at www.archlou.org, and as you do so, please join in fervent prayer for this renewal of minds and hearts in our nation today.

Today I write with concern and love for you and with deep thanks for all of the ways in which our local Church has responded together to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Thanks to our pastors, associate pastors, deacons, and parish staffs who redoubled their efforts to provide ministry in new ways.
- Thanks to our principals, teachers, and school staff who turned on a dime to provide alternative and online instruction for their students.
- Thanks to parents and guardians, who suddenly experienced their role as the “first teachers” of their children in new ways as homes became schoolrooms.
- Thanks to all of you who are healthcare providers, first responders, and essential workers serving on the front lines of this COVID-19 pandemic.
- Thanks to our archdiocesan staff who support teachers and principals in the classroom; provide multiple versions of guidance for remote worship and other liturgical and pastoral issues; work overtime to assist parishes with PPP loans; support seminarians and provide programs such as marriage preparation; work with St. Vincent de Paul chapters and community ministries to provide assistance to those in need; and field hundreds of phone calls from parishes and parishioners.
- Thanks to all of you for your patience and for your support of your parish during the time when we could not gather for public worship.

While I join my brother priests in a collective alleluia to be able to celebrate Mass with you again, I know that we continue to experience uncertainty. We do not yet know the plan or

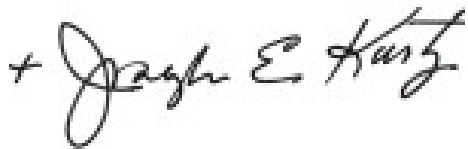
timing for returning to school in the fall, but pastors are communicating with parents about their concern for families, as well as sharing the work carried out behind the scenes so that good decisions are made. I do not know how long we will have restrictions on liturgical celebrations, but I know pastors are working hard to resolve issues such as Confirmations, First Communion, the welcoming of the catechumens and candidates, funerals, weddings, and other pastoral issues. I am pleased that as pastors approach these issues, they are doing so safely and prudently. I know we will make it through this together because I have witnessed your fortitude and faith during these last several months.

In addition to thanking you for supporting your parish, I also wish to express my deep gratitude for your continued good stewardship of our work together as an Archdiocese. As we near the conclusion of the 2019 Catholic Services Appeal, we have reached nearly \$3.8 million, which is 97% of our goal. When the Appeal began last fall, who would have imagined the challenges that awaited in the spring with the arrival of a global pandemic? The 2019 Appeal theme, "To change the world, we must be good to those who cannot repay us" became ever more real as we entered unprecedented times of quarantine, social distancing, and the virtual experience of the Mass. Thank you for your unwavering support, prayers, and continued generosity as we journey through this difficult time.

One of the wonderful innovations of the past few years has been the Catholic Services Appeal prayer intention card that all of you receive with my annual invitation to donate. I receive hundreds of prayer intentions each year, and I take a stack of cards regularly to my private chapel in my residence to pray for those intentions. During the past few months, I have added the intentions of the people of the Archdiocese to my daily prayer.

God love all of you!

Sincerely yours in our Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph E. Kurtz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz, D.D.
Archbishop of Louisville

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