

Dear Friends in Christ,

This letter is being written in the midst of the commemoration of the first anniversary of the COVID-19 Pandemic. It is hard to believe we are approaching a second Easter without being able to gather together. In the midst of this Lenten Season, we experience grief and loss, yet our faith calls us to look ahead to Easter where Jesus embraces the suffering before him and does not waver in his commitment to the cause of the poor and the oppressed, even in the face of political and religious resistance.

In the face of the pandemic, we have all likely wavered at times; but belonging to a community such as St. Thomas, gathering virtually, on Zoom, on YouTube, communicating via phone or email has hopefully steeled your personal resolve to endure this pandemic. And even with the cloud of pandemic hanging over all of us, there is renewal and possibility emerging. Whether that be the vaccine, which represents our best chance to free ourselves from the grips of disease and death, but also the rich renewal of St. Thomas that has begun. In the last 6 months, a new clergy team has been integrated into the parish, we have hired a new Parish Administrator and set to work on an array of projects: Ellwood House Extension, A/V renewal, Liturgical renewal, a review of our parish governance model, virtual Sunday School, parish virtual events, and online Christian education.

Despite our distance from each other, the foundational work for renewal has begun. Over the coming months, you will be receiving various communications as we try to assess where the parish is at and where God is calling us to go. We hope to discern our future together through conversation, prayer, and by trying stuff out and seeing what works, what resonates with our community and our broader neighbourhood.

We are richly blessed and we thank you each and all for your ongoing support and commitment to what the Lord is doing in Ottawa South through our parish.

The richest of Easter Blessings,

Tim+ & Michael+