

Faith community: You're not alone in this

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views on that Mass alone, which is pretty amazing. I'm taping yet again for this Sunday, for the fifth Sunday of Lent. And also we're planning now to tape the Holy Week services, so that those will be available.

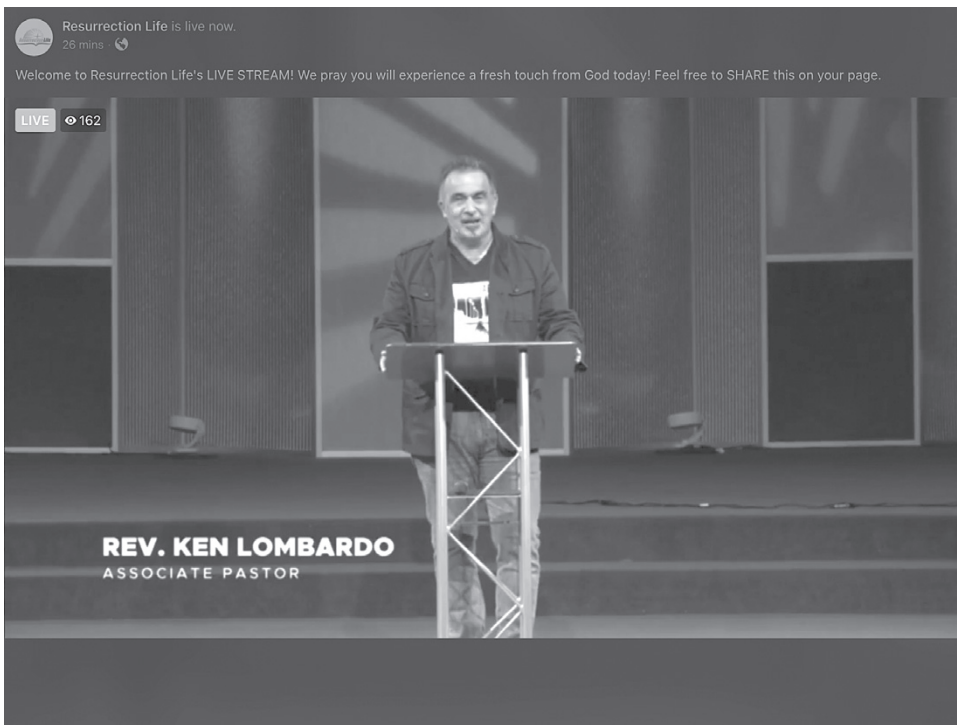
"And they can get on the Our Lady of Victory website, and our social platforms, social media platforms, to see when they're going to be on. I'm also going to be taping more YouTube messages – spiritual messages to the people. There's one out there now that I did with a prayer."

Prayer, LiPuma said, is especially useful right now.

"I'm really just focusing on connecting to everybody; praying for everybody – all of our parishioners, family, friends – it's kind of like almost a strong kind of spiritual communion, where you just keep lifting everybody up and saying, you know, there's a lot of people living now in a lot of fear and anxiety; and there's a lot of people that are home alone; and all the health care workers and all the public servants that are out there on the front lines. So, what we're doing is we're offering our prayer, and our Masses every day, for all those intentions," he said.

Prayer, of course, is not limited to a physical place of worship.

"What I'm encouraging people to do is that you can pray at home, and God will hear your



The Rev. Ken Lombardo of Resurrection Life Church delivers an online message Sunday morning via social media.

prayers," LiPuma said. "You've got to believe and know that God would never, ever abandon us. God's probably closer to us now than we could ever imagine. And I think what God is asking of us is to place our trust – that we will get through this – but we do have to be more careful about how we take care of ourselves, and take care of each other."

In a press release, Buffalo Catholic Diocese Apostolic Administrator Bishop Edward B. Scharfenberger said, "As the faith community of Western New York, we have an important part to play in protecting those most vulnerable and those with underlying medical issues during this

HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE?
Religious community websites offer links to online services, whether on that particular site or via social media.

period of extreme concern over the spread of the coronavirus. I realize how deeply disappointing it is during our season of Lent to refrain from gathering at public Masses and participating together in our liturgical life, but we

must avoid the risk of wider infection. I encourage the faithful, nonetheless, to pray fervently during this time when we must be apart and to continue their Lenten journey within families and in the quiet of their own prayerful reflection, knowing that Christ abides with us always and in every place."

Instead of being fearful, LiPuma said people could use this time for personal reflection and growth.

"I think it's made us realize that the world's a big place, but it's actually quite small, when it comes down to it. And what one person does can really affect the lives of so many other people," he said. "Maybe that's the lesson in all of this, is that, when we get through it, maybe the things that we took for granted, the

things that we thought were so important before, may be not as important. The material things. But what's more important is how we cultivate friendships and relationships in our family; how we return to our faith, to realize that God never abandons us; and you know, right now, maybe that thirst for the Eucharist – that hunger for the Eucharist – will be more real and strong."

A similar sentiment came from the nondenominational Resurrection Life Church in Cheektowaga, which operates one of the largest food pantries in Western New York – feeding hundreds of families each week.

A letter to the congregation read, in part, "Part of our mission here at Resurrection Life Church is to deliver encouragement and guidance in reflecting the light and love of Jesus Christ and to equip and encourage people to face challenges with strength and hope. There is no doubt that we are seeing these challenges unfold right before our eyes.

"What do we do from here? As a church, it's our time to shine brighter than ever. It's an opportunity for us to respond to all situations with greater patience, compassion and understanding. This season is certainly different and difficult, but we are determined to make the greatest impact for Christ while moving forward with wisdom and caution. Both can be accomplished!"

LiPuma said, "What I'm hoping, praying, is that people will stay connected. There's so many options if you get online. I'm just putting in our bulletin – I'm getting it ready for this week now – of different resources for people, that they can click on; and activities to do with your kids at home; how to pray together as a family at home; encouraging people to call neighbors and friends that they know are alone, and pray with them over the phone. ... Skyping, if they can do that. Just to have that physical presence. But even if they can't, just over the phone to say, 'I'm praying for you; I'm thinking about you; I know you're alone in your home,' that kind of stuff.

"We're doing all that to encourage people to look out for their neighbors."

Donation table located outside of chamber office

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do, resource-wise, in planning for what might happen down the road."

Food Supply

DiMino Lewiston Tops is the prime place for groceries in the River Region.

In a press release Sunday, corporate Tops representative Kathy Sautter said, "As essential organizations here in our community, together we are working to ensure that we have the items you need during this trying time. We appreciate your patience as our supply chains and distribution teams have been working around the clock to ensure that the food, cleaning supplies, household essentials and pharmaceuticals that you need are reaching our stores as quickly as possible and are available to purchase in-store, with grocery pickup, or by delivery."

On Monday, Pauly said, "I know (Lewiston) Tops has been busy. And I do know that, every time that I've been in, it's been very, very clean – and you can smell the bleach. I know they've been working very hard to get that as clean as possible. I'm thankful for them to be able to provide. I know they're also adhering to social distancing, as much as they can, and clearing everything out, so we appreciate all that."

Lewiston Tops implemented special Tuesday and Thursday morning shopping hours specifically for seniors. Patrons ages 60

and up have exclusive access to the supermarket from 6-7:30 a.m.

The Chamber of Commerce also is working to supply nonperishables to those who may be off of work or otherwise in need right now. There is a donation table outside the office at the Academy Park corner of Center and South Ninth streets.

"We have donated items out front on our table, and people are able to pick it up, as they need it. They're also able to donate, as they need it," Pauly said. "It's a give or take pantry, so people can take what they need, give what

they need. It's right out front on our porch; and it's definitely something that is needed in our community now with the amount of people that are out of work."

She added, "There's a container there with toiletries, as well, if somebody needs those. Whoever needs anything, we're hoping that this will help."

Town of Lewiston Highway Department

DUE TO THE CURRENT STATE OF EMERGENCY, WE WILL DO THE VERY BEST THAT WE CAN FOR OUR RESIDENTS. PLEASE BE PATIENT.

Town Wide Brush Pickup

April 1 through October 15

Brush Pickup Guidelines

This does not include trees in wooded areas behind homes. If you utilize the services of a contractor, they are responsible for the cleanup of the trimmings.

Branches must measure ten (10) feet or less in length.

All branches MUST be no larger than three (3) inches in diameter.

All branches MUST be piled as neatly as possible with all the cut ends facing the road, piled as close to the road as safely as permits, approximately waist high. Do not place brush on the road, this creates a safety hazard. This enables crews to pick them up quicker and easier.

Please make separate piles. Logs in one and branches in another.

BRANCHES MUST BE FREE OF ROOTS AND DIRT. We do not pick up grass clippings, rocks, stumps, vines, building materials, rubbish, etc. Please do not put these items out with your branches. We will not pick them up as they pose a great danger to the men and equipment.

Town Wide Leaf Pickup

Leaf pickup will also start April 1. Please only put leaves in piles.

We do not go onto private property. Please do not request us to do so.

No need to call, we will be in your neighborhood on a regular rotation.



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