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Holy Tuesday

Dear Brother Priests, Deacons and Subdeacons, Consecrated Men and Women, Lay Faithful:

Just over 3 weeks ago I assisted a man in front of our Cathedral in Brooklyn who had fallen and was disoriented. People around him had already called for an ambulance, but I reached out to assist him as he was quite troubled. Then a person yelled “stay away, he’s coughing, be careful, he may have Coronavirus!”, by then it was too late. The ambulance came and assisted him, and I went back to what I was doing. Little did I know that this would have had the consequences it had. A week later I had a high fever for about eight days, a dry cough, dysentery, loss of taste and smell, and most of the symptoms of Covid-19. Although I did not get tested, I suffered the symptoms and isolated myself in my home and in my office as best as I could.

It has been three weeks now, my fever is much reduced, as is the dysentery, heaviness in my chest, dry cough, and I am still hoping for a return of my sense of smell and taste. I am now on the other side of Covid-19, but what a valuable lesson I have had in suffering with others. I do not regret any of this suffering, I offered it for each of you, and especially for those most affected as well as those serving them within such generosity.

My reason for sharing this is to be honest with you. Many will ask why I will not be on the live streaming this Holy Week. I will continue to self-isolate until I know that I can not do harm to anyone. I thus ask for your prayers, and I assure you of mine.

Every Holy Week we enter into Jesus’ “desired and yet dreaded” Passion (Divine Office of Holy Monday morning). We know that he desired this difficult moment for us, even though he dreaded it. This also describes the great love every Christian bears when sacrificing him/her self for the good of others. Thus, the way of the cross continues to inspire every good and noble sacrificial love that we have within us.

I wish you all a blessed Holy Week.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Gregory John Mansour

GJM/rs