Dear parishioners and friends of St. Joseph Parish,

I begin this Easter message with a word of welcome to our visitors who are joining us through live streaming, available on our Parish website at www.stjosephchurchdanbury.org.

This Easter we are challenged to proclaim the Good News of Christ’s resurrection in circumstances that are unprecedented in the lives of most of us. Due to the pervasive spread of the COVID-19 disease and the “Stay at Home” orders given by both President Donald J. Trump and Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont, which are effective until April 30th, we are not able to gather for the Paschal Triduum and Easter Sunday in church.

As a creative and faithful solution, we mounted a campaign for the audio visual technology for live streaming. Working in record time and with a passion for excellence, two area companies – Brookfield Technology Center and Pascom Sound – made it possible for us to worship in a kind of virtual reality.

The Good News of Easter, therefore, will be proclaimed in the midst of this global pandemic from the altar and pulpit of our beloved St. Joseph Church. The Good News of Christ’s resurrection will be heard in the midst of the death of so many precious lives. The Good News of Christ’s resurrection will be spoken to the sick and to those experiencing grief, pain, and financial difficulties.

Christ’s victory is our victory – and it is a triumph of reason and faith in the midst of the anxious preoccupation with our personal concerns. We are a part of something much greater, namely, the Mystical Body of Christ; the universal Church of God; and our local community of faith, St. Joseph Parish. This sense of community challenges us to think beyond our anxiety to see a way forward through the eyes of faith, in order to be of service to those in need. While we are facing serious challenges, the Risen Christ accompanies us and helps us to find constructive solutions and ways to proclaim the Good News effectively and joyfully. Only with Christ’s help can we say definitively, “We’ll meet again!”

We wish to thank so many of you for sending in your weekly offerings, either in the mail or by using “On-line Giving.” On behalf of the staff, the Parish Trustees, the Finance Council, and the entire St. Joseph Parish community, we wish to express our appreciation for your continuing commitment to the life and ministry of St. Joseph Parish. We are making a difference in the City of Danbury and in our world, especially in these strange and confusing times.

I wish to conclude my message by inviting you to recall the lesson of the widow’s offering as recorded in both St. Mark’s (12:41-44) and St. Luke’s (21:1-4) Gospels. Enter with me into this Gospel scene. Imagine the beauty of the Temple in Jerusalem prior to its destruction in 70 A.D. Between the Court of the Gentiles and the Court of the Women, there was a gate called “Beautiful” (Acts 3:3).

(Please turn over.)
It may well be that Jesus had gone to the “Beautiful Gate” to decompress after the strenuous debates he had had with the emissaries of the Sanhedrin and the Sadducees. Jesus was also there quietly observing the people who were dropping their offerings into the Temple collection box in order to support its mission.

There were affluent people who were obviously making significant donations; then a widow came and put in two tiny coins. Biblical scholars believe that she threw in two “mites” (Greek: *lepta*). *A lepton* means literally a *thin one*, and it was the smallest and least valuable Roman coin in circulation in Judea. It was worth about six minutes of an average daily wage.

Jesus saw the widow offering her gift and called her to the attention of his disciples. “I tell you this,” he said: ‘this poor widow has given more than all the others; for those who have given had more than enough, but she, with less than enough, has given all that she had to live on.’”

The point is that the poor widow trusted in God completely for her well being. Her life was not ruled by fear. She was not overcome by anxiety in making that offering. She gave faithfully and put her life into God’s protecting hands.

Her witness reminds us that we are all making a difference in our world today by our stewardship of time, talent and treasure. We are making a big difference in our sacrificial giving during these difficult days. No gift is too small; no offering is inconsequential. And no one is so poor that he or she has nothing to offer.

My dear friends, the cost of live streaming was not planned at this time but is appreciated now more than ever. Therefore, we moved our Annual Parish Collection – normally in the fall -- to Easter because of its power to bring vibrancy and new life to our liturgies. We are grateful for those who have already responded so generously, as we seek to reach our goal. Easter blessings to you and your loved ones! Christ is Risen!

Devotedly in Christ,

*Rev. Samuel V. Scott*
Pastor