

From the Chaplain's Desk:

Greetings to all Alums of Gonzaga School of Law:

These days, it is undeniable that our community is going through a difficult time caused by the coronavirus. While our natural inclination is to reach out and care for one another, we are asked to practice *social distancing* in order to help minimize the transmission of this illness. For some of us, this means not being able to have a close physical contact to the families and friends in ways that are familiar to us. No doubt, this disconnection with people we care about is painful for many of us. At a time like this, the words of St. Paul to his friends in Philippi comes to mind: "*I give thanks to my God at every remembrance of you, praying always with joy in my every prayer for all of you...For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.*" When St. Paul wrote this, he was imprisoned. But even though he was held captive and away from his friends, his care and concern for them never diminished, and he felt the urge to communicate with them his care and affection for them.

As chaplain of Gonzaga Law School, I am encouraged by the words of St. Paul. I too want to extend that same sentiment of closeness, affection, and hope that I and your *alma mater* have for you: That we continue to give thanks for you, that we are praying for you and your family, and that we too long for you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

With the hardship of separation comes anxiety and fear. There may even be a sense of hopelessness and despair. However, as a people of the faith, we are reminded that our God does not and will not abandon us. When all seems lost, our faith invites to hold more resolutely on to the promises that God had made to our ancestors years ago, and it is the same promise He extends to all us today: In the end, the Resurrected Christ will triumph over all fear, all doubt, and all sadness. The light of Christ will cast away all shadow, all darkness.

Thus, as we go about our daily lives during these exasperating days of social distancing, may our faith in God and may our affection for one another make up for any gap or distance that dares to separate us from one another and from our God. May the Lord's love for each and every one of us connects us with one another in faith and hope, with courage and constancy. Let us live in that grace, holding up those who are in danger and those who care for them.

Please know that I and the Gonzaga Law community are here for you.