



DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

March 17, 2020
St. Patrick

Dear Friends:

On this Saint Patrick's Day, I want to thank you for your heroic and courageous Catholic spirit as we face together the fears, anxieties and uncertainties of the Corona virus outbreak.

Great saints like St. Patrick, St. Damien of Molokai, St. Aloysius Gonzaga, St. Camillus de Lellis, Blessed Frederic Ozanam and so many other lay saints in history walked through similar crises at their moment and place in history and blazed courageous trails of charity that inspire us to this day.

May the Holy Spirit lead us and guide us as together we carry the Cross of Christ and live heroically and courageously the inspiring mission of the Church we love during the painful and traumatic days and months ahead.

May the Holy Spirit take us all to an even deeper love for the Eucharist and the Mass as we all adjust to the very necessary virtual weekday and weekend Masses.

And may the Holy Spirit cast his Fire on the earth through us and our commitment to courageous holiness.

I have prayed St. Patrick's Breastplate Prayer on many St. Patrick's Days in the course of my life. But it has never been more powerful than today.

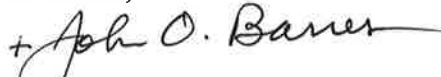
We pray it together today remembering the sick, the suffering, the elderly, doctors, nurses, pastoral caregivers, public health officials, civil leaders and, of course, all of you who we love and serve in the great evangelizing Catholic parishes of Long Island.

St. Patrick's Breastplate

*Christ with me,
Christ before me,
Christ in me,
Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,
Christ on my right,
Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down,
Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of every person who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.*

Know that you are all in my prayers and Masses in these challenging times.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John O. Barres". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend John O. Barres
Diocese of Rockville Centre