

Coronavirus Announcements

March 18, 2020

We live in some difficult times. Understandably, we can feel fearful, concerned, and worried. But let us hear what God says to us:

Do not fear: I am with you;

Do not be anxious: I am your God.

I will strengthen you, I will help you,

I will uphold you with my victorious right hand. (Isaiah 41:10)

When we are going through difficult times, God will be faithful! And so, let us put our hope in Him! St. Paul says: "this hope will not disappoint."

Having said that, let us follow the directions of our pastor and our diocese. Bishop Kettler is telling us to take some drastic measures. He is serious about the guidelines given by the Federal Center for Disease Control and Prevention-never have gatherings of 50 or more people and the elderly or those with underlying health conditions should avoid gatherings of more than 10 people. Before listing directions, here are some available opportunities.

At this time, the parish offices will remain open.

Fr. Ben, Fr. Botzet and Fr. Tim will continue to be committed to providing pastoral care as much as possible during this pandemic. You may call them for the sacraments of Anointing of the Sick, Confession, or other individual needs. They will also be celebrating private Masses every day for all the currently scheduled Mass intentions and for God's blessing upon us and the whole world.

Bishop Kettler is allowing for personal Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Our Adoration will continue to take place in our JPll Center Adoration Chapel. We would like to keep this chapel to ONLY one or two people at a time. During the day, if there are 1 or 2 in the chapel, the main Church of Our Lady of Lourdes will be open for additional people to use for prayer in the presence of the tabernacle. During the night, only our scheduled adorers and substitutes should use the Adoration chapel. Sanitizer will be provided at the door of the chapel and wipes for furniture after use. A daily wipe down of the Adoration Chapel will be done.

During this time, families are invited to spend quality time with each other and make memories. Take time to pray together such as the rosary, reading the Sunday or even the weekday Scripture Readings.

Diocesan Directions:

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*All public weekday and weekend Masses are suspended effective immediately until April 13, the day after Easter. All Catholics are temporarily dispensed from the obligation by the bishop until further notice.

*All baptisms are to be rescheduled.

*If a wedding needs to take place, a dispensation needs to be granted by the bishop. (It was indicated to me that dispensation will only be granted if the guest list for the ceremony is very small.)

*Funeral Masses are prohibited. However graveside services are allowed and memorial Masses are encouraged for a later date.

*Confirmations before April 13 are postponed until a later date. (Its reasonable to say Confirmations after April 13 are pending in light of further possible developments.)

*Communal Penance Services are cancelled but individual Confessions may be offered.

*All public Holy Week liturgies – including Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter Vigil, and Easter Sunday are cancelled.

*As usual, churches ought to be open for private prayer and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Social distancing is encouraged – at least 6 feet between people seated in prayer or standing in line.

*These directions are subject to change as warranted by unfolding circumstances.

In Christ,

Fr. Ben