



EXTENSION OF MEASURES TO STEM COVID-19

April 14, 2020

Tuesday within the Octave of Easter

To the Faithful and Clergy of the Diocese of Duluth,

Given that COVID-19 remains a serious threat to the health and well-being of believer and non-believer alike, for the common good, the temporary measures enacted to protect against the virus are extended **through Monday, May 4, 2020**. Again, should the situation improve more quickly, these measures would be lifted at that time. As a reminder:

All public Masses are suspended.

- The obligation to attend Sunday Mass is lifted until the crisis passes.
- Priests may say a private Mass without a congregation present, remembering their people at Mass.
- Mass can be followed on television, radio and online.
- Sundays are to be observed as the Lord's Day through devotional practices such as an hour of silent prayer, the Rosary and other devotions.
- Priests should see to it that churches remain open for an extended period of time each day so that those who wish may come and pray before the Lord in the tabernacle.
- The Sacrament of Penance should be offered at regular times.
- Priests are asked to place Stations of the Cross booklets in the Churches and other devotionals for the private use of the faithful.
- Priests are asked to keep their parish offices accessible in accordance with the 'Stay at Home' **Emergency Executive Order 20-20**.
- Parish celebrations of First Communion and Confirmation should be postponed to a later date.

Gatherings of more than ten (10) people are cancelled.

- If you feel ill, stay at home.
- If you are 60 or older, or have an underlying medical condition, stay home.
- Wash your hands frequently (recommended 20 seconds).
- When with others, practice social distancing (recommended 6 ft between people).
- If you experience symptoms of fever, cough, and shortness of breath, call your physician and ask to be tested for the virus.

Priests and the Faithful are asked to fulfill the requirements of the Corporal Works of Mercy during this time, as best they can.

- The sick are to be cared for with visits, Holy Communion, Anointing of the Sick and Viaticum.
- Funerals are to be private (only family and close friends).
- There are to be no funeral receptions.

There is no doubt, the celebration of the Holy Week liturgies was very different for all of us this year. Yet, we have arrived, as always, at the culmination of our Church year, rejoicing in the Resurrection from the dead of our Lord Jesus Christ.

These past days have given us all a greater appreciation of the many gifts our loving God shares with us, especially to gather with family and friends, to gather as people of faith, and to receive the Lord in Holy Communion. Until the day we will be able to return to these blessings, we keep faith. Please continue to pray for victims of this pandemic, their loved ones, and their caregivers.

The spiritual communions, daily prayers, sacrifices, and works of charity offered up by you, the Catholic faithful, and the creativity and zeal with which our priests have brought us online Masses, podcasts, and the like, to keep us together in worship of the Lord and service of his people, is a graced moment and truly inspiring.

We believe that the resurrection of Jesus, the Son of God, holds out the promise of our resurrection, as well, as his brothers and sisters. So even as we are tested, we share the joy of Easter in company with our mother, Mary, and all the saints and angels. May God bless you abundantly in these Easter days and always.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "J. James Bissonette".

Reverend James B. Bissonette
Diocesan Administrator