



Embracing God's People • Equipping Disciples • Accompanying Believers

March 17, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Faith,

The extraordinary realities with which we are being confronted in our times cannot be overstated, it would seem. Last evening, I received updated guidance from officials at the Archdiocese of Los Angeles concerning the measures our parishes must take in stepping up to do our part to confront the public health threat presented by the coronavirus.

All Public Masses Suspended

Effective March 17th and through March 29th, all public masses throughout the Archdiocese of Los Angeles are suspended.

At Our Lady of Lourdes, the Church will remain open Monday through Friday from 9am to 9pm. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed on the main altar, and people are welcome to participate in individual, private prayer. For those who come to Church, please remember to observe the State Department of Public Health guidance of remaining at least six feet (6') apart, and to avoid any gatherings of ten (10) or more.

The weekday (12:10pm) and Sunday Mass (English 10am and Spanish 12:30pm) will be livestreamed from the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angles via the LA Catholics Facebook page ([facebook.com/lacatholics](https://www.facebook.com/lacatholics)). For more information on additional Mass broadcasts on TV and radio, visit <http://lacatholics.org/emergency>

We are posting the Archdiocesan notice on the parish website, <http://ollnr.weconnect.com>, and below can be found how we will strive to both adhere to the guidance we have received as well as taking care of the needs of those entrusted to our pastoral care.

Preparing to Keep the Lord's Day Holy

I encourage every family to endeavor to undertake some intentional prayer at home, and especially on Sunday, as a way to keep the Lord's Day holy in these extraordinary circumstances. Praying a rosary together, or reading scriptures together, may be novel and even a little uncomfortable on a Sunday morning when we are used to gathering with the broader community for Church. However, the domestic Church is vibrant and alive when it is given air to breathe. To read the scriptures and especially the gospel of Sunday, I would encourage going to the website of the US Bishops, at <http://uscgb.org>, and clicking on the appropriate date. While praying with your families, be mindful to pray for your friends and those whom you are used to seeing in Church on Sunday. As you lift them in prayer, you will enter into what was once referred to traditionally as "spiritual communion".

Announcing “Lourdes Neighbors”

The purpose of “Lourdes Neighbors” is to connect vulnerable and “at-risk” parishioners who are in situations preventing them from being able to go out and take care of ordinary but necessary personal business such as grocery-shopping, prescription collection, etc., with volunteers who are willing to assist in these circumstances.. If you - or someone you know - are in the “at risk” or “vulnerable” category (65+ and/or with underlying health conditions), and need some help in taking care of an errand, please call or text the coordinator, Dale, at (818) 639-1491.

If you'd like to volunteer to participate as a Neighbor helping a neighbor in this way, please email pastor@ollnr.org

The Good of All

It is helpful to consider that the actions we are taking at this time are designed primarily for the good of others. The inconveniences we experience are invitations to be aware of the sacrifices in which we are all invited to participate at this time. This will be difficult for some, but on this St. Patrick's Day, perhaps a lesson to be learned from Ireland's Patron Saint... Keep in mind that his growth in faith and his journey into discipleship in Christ took place while he was a slave in captivity in Ireland, far from family and friends, and without any access to the comfort of the sacraments. He grew into faithfulness to Christ, and God remained faithful to him. He developed a practice of daily, personal prayer, and this sustained him through many real hardships, ultimately leading to his emancipation and the life of faith we've all come to appreciate. God can accomplish extraordinary things in our lives, even without our usual and preferred sacramental and ritual practices.

Below you will find some further information that may be of use to you with respect to parish life for the next few weeks.

Fr. David

UPDATED Information for Our Lady of Lourdes, Northridge. (03/17/2020, 11:00am)

- Following his action to dispense everyone from the obligation to attend mass on Sunday, **Archbishop Gomez has suspended all public celebration of the Eucharist Sunday, effective March 17-29.** In the announcement, the Archbishop wrote the following: “I deeply regret that we are forced to temporarily suspend public celebration of the Mass in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles... What we do in the Church, we do out of love for God and love for our brothers and sisters. We are taking this extraordinary step today out of love and concern for those in our families and communities who are most vulnerable to this deadly coronavirus.”
- The Church will remain open for the faithful to enter into private, individual prayer. The Blessed Sacrament will be exposed on the main altar from 9am to 9pm, Monday through Friday.

While in Church

At all times those gathering in Church are asked to observe the guidance issued by the State Department of Public Health, having no more than ten (10) people gather at any one time, and keeping a minimum of six feet (6') between individuals.

Mass Schedule

All public masses are suspended. The priests of the parish are committed to saying mass privately each day, during which time the mass intentions we have already committed to will be honored.

The faithful are invited to participate in live-streamed or broadcast masses as available.

<https://lacatholics.org/mass-for-the-homebound/>

Parishioners are invited to email particular intentions to prayerintentions@ollnr.org. The intentions will be prayed for at the private masses of the priests of the parish.

Adoration Chapel

We closed the Adoration chapel yesterday (Monday, 3/16), and it will remain closed throughout the time of concern. **The Blessed Sacrament will instead be exposed on the main altar of the church** from 9am to 9pm.

The Sacrament of Baptism

Unless there is an emergency, we will comply with the guidance we have received, encouraging us to postpone baptism to a more suitable time and circumstance. In an emergency, we will provide all possible care to parents and families.

Funerals

The community of believers will always seek to surround the deceased and their families with love and respect. However, it is important that people with underlying health issues and others who are vulnerable, should not attend funerals. As a family of faith, here at Lourdes we will support the bereaved within the guidelines for gatherings offered by state health authorities.

At this time, and until this health threat passes, the service of Christian Burial will continue, but only using the "**Rite of Committal and Final Commendation**", popularly referred to as "the Graveside Service". While we are unable at this time to celebrate a Funeral Mass, we will work with bereaved families to schedule a Memorial Service at a later time, should that be desired.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

For the time being, "Confessions" will continue to be celebrated on **Saturdays, 4pm-5pm**. Those seeking to celebrate the sacrament should be prepared to make confession outside of the usual confessional. With this in mind, those waiting should stand at a sufficient distance to allow for propriety. Also, those waiting in line are to observe "social distancing" guidance.

Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

A priest continues to be available 24/7 by calling the parish office at (818) 349-1500. Outside office hours, select option "0" for a death & dying emergency. Your call will be forwarded to the priest on duty for emergencies. Increased attention to sanitary protocols will be observed before, during and following a visit.

Sacrament of Matrimony

Weddings will be limited to the celebration of the Marriage Rite itself, and must be limited to no more than ten (10) people present, inclusive of the presiding minister.

Parish School

Effective Monday, March 16, Our Lady of Lourdes School students began working remotely from home and will not physically attend school through Tuesday, March 31. Our Principal, Mr. Brough, is monitoring and evaluating this work throughout, and is in regular contact with school faculty and staff. Faculty are making themselves available to students and parents during set hours, and are facilitating ongoing remote learning throughout this time.

Faith Formation / RCIA / Families of Faith / Confirmation / Youth Ministry

All gatherings are suspended and will remain so through at least March 29. As we approach this date, we will review our circumstances and will develop next steps in consultation with all who are impacted by this ongoing health threat.

Parish Office

Our parish offices will remain open to serve our community, with some creative adaptation. Staff will continue to report for work, but most work will take place remotely. We are here for you if you feel the need to call or meet with any of us, understand that drop-ins can not be accommodated at this time. Call ahead if something is needed, and a staff person will call you back as soon as is feasible.

Suggestion for Prayer - MEMORARE

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection,
implored your help, or sought your intercession,
was left unaided.

Inspired by this confidence,
I fly unto you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother.
To you do I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful.
O Mother of the Word Incarnate,
despise not my petitions,
but in your mercy, hear and answer me.
Amen.

Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for us.