



Embracing God's People • Equipping Disciples • Accompanying Believers

March 13, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Faith,

These are indeed momentous times as we find ourselves accompanying one another on this journey. With all that has been going on today since the Archdiocese of Los Angeles published its guidance for parishes, I have been touched at the faith, hope, love and trust in God being expressed by so many. I invite you all to continue to hold in prayer all who are fearful, all who are anxious and all who are struggling with health issues. Pray too for our health care professionals, near and far, who are serving the community both locally and globally. Pray God's blessings and guidance on medical researchers and decision makers for public policy. Pray for all those who are feeling alone or isolated in these trying days.

The Good of All

As a family of faith here at Our Lady of Lourdes, we face into the fears and concerns of these days with hearts open to the care and goodness of God, mindful of the gifts and resources with which we are blessed. In every age we are reminded of the marvels the Lord works for us (Ps105), even as we walk in dark valleys (Ps23). Even in his most difficult moments, Jesus was always mindful of those around him, and solicitous of those in need. As his disciples, we too make our choices not only with our own needs in mind, but also with the needs of the community at heart. In these days, it is important for us to show particular concern for the elderly, the ill, and those with underlying medical conditions. In these times we are all called to sacrifice something of our own comfort and habits so that the entire community may benefit. Together we work to contain and mitigate the spread of the virus.

Below you will find some 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. (03/13/2020, 5pm)

- **Archbishop Gomez has dispensed everyone from the obligation to attend mass on Sunday** (see below). Here at Lourdes, our **Sunday Mass Schedule will continue as normal** for the time being for those who wish to gather. We will do so while observing the State Guidance limiting to 250 the number of those who can be in the Church at any one time, and being respectful of the new "norm" of social distance (6' between people).

- All gatherings that are not essential (meetings, prayer groups, retreats, penance services, etc.) are cancelled.
- We currently anticipate celebrating First Communion and Confirmation on their respective dates as planned.
- The Church will remain open for the faithful to enter into prayer.

While in Church

As far as is possible, those gathering in Church are asked to keep a distance of six (6) feet from one another, in keeping with current recommendation from the CA State Department of Public Health.

Mass Schedule

For the time being, we are maintaining our regular mass schedule for weekdays and weekends. All faithful in Los Angeles are dispensed from the usual Sunday Obligation by Archbishop Gomez. Those who are considered “vulnerable” (over 60, or with underlying health concerns), are encouraged to join in a “spiritual communion” rather than to be physically present in Church. State guidance of no more than 250 people gathered in Church at any one time will be observed, as will the “social distance” guide of six (6) feet of distance between families/individuals. We will closely monitor and adapt our mass schedule as necessary going forward. The faithful are invited to participate in live-streamed or broadcast masses as available.

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

Adoration Chapel

Beginning Monday, March 16, the adoration chapel will be closed and **the Blessed Sacrament will instead be exposed on the main altar of the church** following the 9am mass until 9pm, Monday through Friday. People are encouraged to join in quiet meditation and prayer in the presence of Our Lord while respecting the need to observe “social distance” from others. Accommodations will be made for funerals.

Communion

The Holy Eucharist will be offered in the species of the Consecrated host, and only on the hand. Sharing of the Precious Blood is suspended for the present.

The Sacrament of Baptism

If parents choose to continue with plans to baptize their children during this time, we are happy to affirm and facilitate this choice. Pastoral adaptations may be used during the ceremony for anointing with holy oils and pouring of water. Parents who choose to defer baptism until this health threat has passed will be supported and facilitated.

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, we are unable to host receptions or social gatherings after funeral services.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

For the time being, our usual schedule of "Confessions" will continue.

Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

A priest is 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.

School

Effective Monday, March 16, Our Lady of Lourdes School students will work remotely from home and will not physically attend school through Tuesday, March 31. Our Principal, Mr. Brough, will monitor and evaluate throughout this time, while teachers and staff will be available via email during regular school hours.

Parish Office

Our parish offices will remain open and our parish staff will continue to report for work. We are here for you if you feel the need to call or meet with any of us.

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.