

March 27, 2020

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Thank you for your ongoing prayers, your extraordinary generosity, and your witness of vigilant faith during these very challenging times. As our society continues to adapt to the spread of COVID-19, so too you are very much on my mind and in my prayer. With this note, allow me to provide updates of life and ministry at St. Patrick's.

My deepest desire continues to be for Your safety, your spiritual and physical well-being, and that of our parish community remain my deepest desire. In light of Governor Walz's guidance on March 25th, the recommendations of the Minneapolis-St Paul Archdiocese and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), expect further adjustments to St Patrick Church operations as we manage this crisis together. My staff and I continue to offer spiritual support in as many ways as possible. Here follow some current notes:

Availability of the Mass: On March 18th Archbishop Hebda suspended all public celebrations of the Mass. The Archdiocesan website archspm.org/covid19 lists online resources for Sunday Masses, as well as Daily Masses, Spiritual Communion prayers, the Litany in Time of Need, and other resources.

Confessions: Archbishop Hebda encourages Confessions to continue. Given his instructions, I offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation Friday 12-1 p.m Saturdays 4-5 p.m. and Sundays 8-9 a.m. until the suspension is removed. Of course, I implore you, in addition to the usual privacy for the Sacrament, to practice the now well-publicized social distancing guidelines.

Baptisms: I ask that we celebrate Baptism with immediate family only until further notice, using newly blessed water for each baptism. Please phone me if you would like to schedule a baptism.

Anointing of the Sick: I am ready and would be honored to anoint you if you are ill, assuming you are in a home or care facility that allows me to visit you. If in a public facility, please check the policies of your care facility or hospital. Also note that Fr. Fehn continues to provide ministry at the local hospitals.

Funerals: Our Archdiocese requests funeral celebrations with immediate family only, given requested precautions, during this troublesome time.

Faith Formation: Please continue to pray, meditate on the Scriptures, and use all the resources available on the Archdiocesan and on Catholic websites.

Pastoral Support: Should you feel isolated and alone during this time of social distancing, please do not hesitate to call upon St Patrick staff. We, of course, offer our best but also request you help us help you—our volunteers are calling the elder members of our parish to check on their well-being. If you or someone you know would like a call, please let us know.

Stewardship: I pray you will continue supporting the parish financially. The COVID-19 virus brings out the best of humankind in generous response to those in need. As you consider what you can do, please know your contributions keep our Parish (facilities and staff) operational during this time. Please consider using our online option at stpatrick-edina.org website. Mailing your contribution is another way to support the parish. Both during this time and for many months to come, the Lord asks us to relieve the plight and suffering of our less fortunate Brothers and Sisters...perhaps, if you are able, the Lord may be asking you to give more of your means? At all times, know of my prayer and gratitude.

The Facilities remain closed during this time for the protection of the staff and parishioners. In-person visits are still possible, but I ask us to do so only in cases of necessity or urgency, with the exception of the Main Church during Confessions. If you need assistance, we will respond to all voicemails and emails. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us. If you don't have direct numbers, they are located on the back cover of the bulletin at our website or you can call the main parish number 952-941-3164. If you know of a fellow parishioner who does not have internet access or has not been receiving the emails we have been sending, please have them phone our office to give us the address.

Once again, please know my heart, mind, and prayers are united with you and our families during this unprecedented time of challenge. Amidst the challenges, I love hearing your stories and your experiences of the grace of God. As Lent asks of us sacrifices, so COVID-19 demands sacrifice of our desires and way of life. I covet your thoughts as I too am asked to be a priest in ways I have not been in many years.

With my heartfelt prayers,

Fr. Allen R. Kuss
St. Patrick Catholic Church
Pastor
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