

Message from Father Joe 3-19-2020

Dear Parishioners,

We are living in sadly historic times. Given the unprecedented developments related to the Coronavirus, our shared faith life in our parish and across the diocese is undergoing radical change. Yesterday Bishop Paprocki issued a decree suspending all public Masses and the sacraments with a congregation, effective immediately until further notice, including Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter. Click here to view the Bishop's decree <https://www.dio.org/coronavirus> Please read the document in its entirety.

That means we will not see each other to celebrate Mass on weekends and weekdays. How unfortunate. The bishop speaks about this as “a fast from the Eucharist for the sake of the physical and spiritual healing of all those in our diocese, nation, and world.” During this time I am to celebrate Mass “*sine populo*”, that is, without a congregation, privately in church.

At this time we are not ready to live stream or record my private Mass. That may happen, as I value that you can see me in the sanctuary of our church, and pray remotely with me. In the meantime, there are many live Masses, for instance on EWTN and Word on Fire with Bishop Robert Barron. Go to <https://www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass/>

If you can join a Mass online or television, or if not, I encourage you to read the Mass readings, pray with your families, and join yourself to the Eucharist --- the source and summit of our Catholic faith --- by making an act of spiritual communion like the one recommended by Archbishop Gomez: “I wish, my Lord, to receive you with the purity, humility, and devotion with which your most holy Mother received you, with the spirit and fervor of the saints.”

While I encourage you to adhere to the guidelines of social distancing and avoidance of public spaces, etc., I also want to keep the church open, early morning till midafternoon, for your private prayer before the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle, or to pray the Stations of the Cross. Anyone who is sick or believes he or she may have come into contact with the virus is to remain home, and anyone visiting the church or any other public place for prayer is strongly encouraged to follow CDC guidelines for prevention and hygiene. The holy water has been removed at the basins. However there is some in the canister in the vestibule should you desire to take some home. Please provide your own container. I will visit the homebound as requested with the sacraments, and see the diocesan document about confessions.

Be sure to go to our website for the latest information. If you are not getting the email blasts from the CTK, please email Erin in the office, church@ctkparish.com.

It is critical at this time to lift up in prayer our hurting world. Pray for those who are sick, may God give them healing. Pray for those who have lost a loved one or has one who is ill, may God give them comfort. Pray for those who are suffering financially because of the crisis, may God give them all they need. Pray for those who are frightened, may God give them courage. Pray for those who are serving others in this crisis, may God give them health and strength. And pray we may soon return to normalcy. Be assured of my prayers. While I am saddened by these circumstances, I know that God has not abandoned us. Keep the faith, be safe and healthy.

Fr. Joe

A prayer for all those affected by the Coronavirus throughout the world:

Compassionate and loving Father,
in the face of confusion and concern
impart to us the calm of Your presence.
In You allow us to find hope and healing.
Be with those who serve the sick and
give them Your caring hands.
Be with those who lead and give them
Your Spirit of wisdom.
Be with those who have fallen ill and
give them Your comforting heart.
Wrap Your arms around our world
and hold us in Your love.
Allow us at this time of trial to then
serve as instruments of that love
to all we meet.
We ask this in Your Name. Amen.