



 (904) 287-0519

 www.sjdrparish.org

 1718 State Road 13 North
Saint Johns, FL 32259

Good afternoon,

I am writing you to ensure that each of you are informed and aware of the operations of our parish during this COVID-19 pandemic crisis. As many of you know, the Bishop has canceled all public masses in our diocese until further notice. We were able to record the Sunday mass this past weekend and upload it onto our website, FB page and YouTube for our parishioners to celebrate the mass as a faithful community. We have also loaded a homily from Fr Dilip as well as several beautiful gifts of song from our various choir members. While we are unable to celebrate our faith together in person, we are making every attempt to stay connected as a faith community and celebrate while still doing our part to stop the spread of this virus and protect our loved ones from harm. We plan to continue to post the weekly masses, as well as special messages from our clergy and staff to help you feel engaged and included with San Juan del Rio. Additionally, we began having a “drive-up” time for reconciliation from 1-3pm yesterday and will do so again on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 1pm to 3pm this week. Please come to the church and remain in your cars until either myself or Fr Dilip call you up to the church portico. We will do our best to go in order of arrival, so please try to be aware of your place in line. The various updates from our parish can be found online at www.sjdrparish.org as well as on our San Juan del Rio Catholic Church FB page, or the San Juan del Rio Community page.

On another note, we know that many of you have already either been affected directly by this virus economically, or have known someone that has been touched by it in some way. Our hearts go out to all those who have been sickened or lost their jobs due to this pandemic. While we are doing everything possible to keep our doors open and reach our faithful community, there has been a strain on the resources coming in to the local churches. During this time of uncertainty, if you are financially able to continue to give to San Juan del Rio, please consider moving to online giving. Online giving can be found at <https://www.parishgiving.org/Main.aspx>. These contributions are tracked in the same way we track envelopes, so please do not worry that we will not know of your contribution. Giving online also provides the following benefits:

- Contributions come in whether or not you are physically at mass, which during this time is essential
- We do not have to rely on the post office to deliver envelopes that are mailed, which is a safer option and cuts down on the time until your contribution is received
- The contributions are collected and tracked in a more automated way than the envelopes, which reduces the strain on our current resources
- Online giving allows churches to plan for future expenses and decision making, which is critical in our current environment



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We completely understand that not everyone will be able to continue to give as they have in the past, so we ask those families to pray for our community as we will continue to pray for you. Additionally, I have heard many of your concerns about the inability to attend mass or have reconciliation at this time. Please see the attached update from Bishop Estévez regarding the Pope's permission to grant Plenary Indulgences during this crisis. To further protect and calm fears, Bishop Estévez has also dispensed all of the Catholic faithful from the obligation to attend Sunday mass **until the suspension of Sunday mass is rescinded**. Please also know that although we are unable to provide a physical communion during this time, we encourage you to pray in spiritual communion with us as we celebrate the mass. Please see our website for that prayer.

Please know that we are doing everything possible to maintain as much normalcy as possible in this very fluid situation, and that we continue to keep each and every one of you in our prayers, as well as those who have been personally affected by this pandemic. We very much look forward to the day when we can commune together. Until that day, please continue to check our website or FB page for updates each week as well as the celebrations of mass or homilies by our priests. God bless you and your families.

God bless,
Fr John Tetlow