



DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

March 14, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sister in Christ,

As Holy Mother Church makes her pilgrimage through the Lenten Season, please be assured of my continuing prayerful encouragement and support. As mentioned in my recent letter, together with our Priests and Diocesan Staff, I have been closely monitoring developments regarding the threat posed by the Coronavirus, particularly for the most vulnerable among us.

For this reason, out of pastoral concern, a dispensation has been issued from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass for those effected by the Coronavirus. Now that a national emergency has been declared and the State of Florida has provided further guidance, many of the Catholic Faithful may deem it prudent to avoid large gatherings. Therefore, out of an abundance of spiritual concern, I now extend the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass to all the Catholic Faithful until further notice.

The celebration of the Holy Eucharist will continue in our churches with the necessary precautions. All the Catholic Faithful are asked to observe the Lord's Day with reverence and in spiritual communion with one another, whether you attend Mass or not during this time.

Let us be united in prayer that God, who is our refuge and strength, will give us courage and perseverance in charity during this time, that we might remain healthy and encourage our brothers and sisters who are ill.

Through the intercession of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, may you be kept safe from all harm and uplifted by your Lenten prayer and fasting.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *Frank J. Dewane*

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Bishop of the Diocese of
Venice in Florida