



March 13, 2020

Dear Parish Family,

As so many in Church and Government leadership look to address our concerns during this difficult and uncertain time, extreme measures have been enacted to mitigate the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Nevertheless, I want to assure you of one thing above all else:

## **Jesus is *NOT* under quarantine!**

He is, however, challenging us to trust and love Him in extraordinary ways, not unlike His first disciples. Here is a quick summary of how we are working together to overcome these challenges at St. Monica.

### All Masses and other liturgies

- Archbishop Etienne has suspended all public Masses in the Archdiocese of Seattle temporarily until further notice. Consequently, all Catholics in Western Washington are dispensed from their obligation to attend Sunday Mass until it is reinstated. You can read more about this on his blog ([www.archbishopetienne.com](http://www.archbishopetienne.com)), which is where he will be frequently providing his own pastoral messages.
- Every effort must still be made to keep Sunday holy and free from servile work. Furthermore, time should be taken to reflect upon the Sunday readings from Sacred Scripture and pray, especially as families. There are numerous online and app resources to aid you. And remember, Church begins at home!
- I will offer private Sunday and Daily Masses for previously scheduled intentions at an undisclosed time and place. However, Sunday Mass will be recorded and distributed via email as well as posted to our website at [www.stmonicami.org](http://www.stmonicami.org).

You may also like to 'attend' Sunday Mass on ETWN at 9am on cable channel 233 or on your computer at the following link: ([www.ewtn.com/tv/shows/sunday-mass-live](http://www.ewtn.com/tv/shows/sunday-mass-live)). Additional opportunities for local live streaming of Sunday Mass featuring our Bishops include:

**Saturday, March 14, at 5 p.m.** – Bishop Mueggenborg

Streaming at [www.stlouis.org](http://www.stlouis.org)

**Sunday, March 15, at 10 a.m.** – Archbishop Etienne

Facebook page: @archdioceseofseattle

**Sunday, March 15, at 11:30 a.m.** – Bishop Elizondo (Spanish)

Facebook page: @CatolicosNW

If you decide to take advantage of any of these Mass offerings, I encourage you to make a *spiritual* communion after the priest or Bishop receives, using this prayer my Meema taught me:

*Jesus, I love you.  
Jesus, I want you.  
Jesus, I need you.  
Take me, Jesus.  
I am Yours.*

- Eucharistic Exposition and Adoration will be available for you and your family in the church every day, 7 days a week, from 8am to 8pm. Come and pray over the daily Mass readings, make *spiritual* communions, recite the Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet, and contemplate the mystery of Jesus' Real Presence in the Eucharist.
- Friday evening Stations of the Cross are canceled. However, I encourage you to pray the stations on your own at any time. There are numerous apps you can use with no one better than another. If you have young children, I suggest you have them make their own stations and post them around your house. Just be sure to trace the cross and number on each one. Then, you can pray them together as a family. You also can create your own prayers for each one.
- Individual confessions will be heard at the following times:
  - (New) Friday evening 7pm-8pm.
  - (New) Saturday 8am-9am.
  - Saturday 3:30pm to 4:30pm.
  - Please DO NOT LINE UP for the Confessional to maintain 'social distancing.'
- Baptisms, funeral Masses, and memorial services will be either postponed or private gatherings of immediate family only without a reception.
- To minimize risk of virus contagion, we have temporarily removed all hymnals and paper products from the pews and vestibules. Printed materials of limited quantities are available from the parish office for your sole use. Please do not leave anything in the church. Also, there are multiple tablet and smartphone apps for Catholic devotion. Personally, I use iBreviary, Laudate, Stations of the Cross (add free version), and Universalis.

### School

In accordance with the recent directive from Governor Inslee, all public and private schools in King, Snohomish and Pierce Counties will remain closed until April 24th. Thankfully, our Principal and teachers have implemented a remote learning program so our students can continue learning from home/online. All school events outside the classroom are postponed or canceled until further notice.

### RE, CYO, and other parish gatherings

All Religious Education programs, CYO sports, and other events are either postponed or canceled until further notice.

## Parish and School Offices

Parish and School staff will be on hand to conduct necessary business. Hours of operation are 8am to 4pm for the Parish and 8am to 3pm for the School. Any changes will be announced through Constant Contact communications as well as our websites. See [www.stmonicami.org/134](http://www.stmonicami.org/134) for more information.

As your priest and pastor, I continue to be available for Confession, the Anointing of the Sick, spiritual counseling, and humorous anecdotes. You also will see me Exposing and Reposing the Blessed Sacrament most mornings and evenings. Deacon Frank will be around as well.

In my letter last week, I quoted St. Padre Pio's motto, "Pray, hope, and don't worry!" as well as asking you to pray the Memorare. This week, I put before you the simple prayer of St. Faustina, "Jesus, I Trust in You!"

Please stay vigilant and take the necessary precautions to remain physically, mentally, and spiritually healthy. If the staff or I can assist you in any way, please call us at 206.232.2900 even if you just feel the need to talk. And speaking of talking, I would like all of you to spend more time actually *talking* to family and friends rather than texting. We all need to do more, especially now, to close the ever widening 'social gap.'

Faithfully yours,

Fr. Freitag  
Pastor

P.S. People have asked for the written prayer the Archbishop used in his video address. Here is the link:

<http://www.seattlearchdiocese.org/Assets/General/Electronic-PrayerCard2-030520.pdf>