

DIOCESE OF MARQUETTE
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March 23, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Earlier today the governor issued a stay-at-home order in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, I hereby enact the follow directives effective through April 13, 2020 at 11:59 pm ET.

- The public celebration of Mass and all the sacraments is suspended. Confession, anointing of the sick and viaticum are to be made available in danger of death situations. The celebration of funerals will be postponed.
- Churches are to be closed and will not be open for private prayer.
- All gatherings at parishes are to be suspended.
- Parishes will be operating with the staff necessary to conduct minimum basic operations. Since parishes still need to pay the bills, I invite you to continue supporting your parish.

At this time, your pastors and I will keep all of you in prayer and continue to reach out to you remotely. I will be livestreaming a private Mass from my chapel on Sunday afternoons at 1:30 pm ET. Direction on how to access the livestream as well as a Mass program will be found on the diocesan website.

God does not abandon us. Now is the time even more to gather and pray together with you family at home. Make your house a little hermitage. Set aside a prayer-corner, a special place where the family can gather for prayer and where individual family members can take turns praying in private and quiet. I invite all of you to pray daily the following prayer.

Prayer to Our Lady, Health of the Sick

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick. At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus' pain, with steadfast faith.

You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need. We are certain that you will provide, so that, as you did at Cana of Galilee, joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the Father's will and to do what Jesus tells us: He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.

We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God. Do not despise our pleas— we who are put to the test— and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.

With prayers that your hearts be filled with peace and the love of God, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend John F. Doerfler, STD, JCL
Bishop of Marquette