



IMPORTANT UPDATES

March 18, 2020

Dear St. Elizabeth's Family,

As you are all well aware, the coronavirus epidemic has, in the last few days, begun to have a major impact on our community. During this difficult time, when social distancing is imposed on us as a necessity, and when many are suffering from illness and disruption, we want to remain closely united to each other, to our parish, and to the Lord. We want to take this opportunity to communicate with you about how we plan to move forward as a parish community during this time.

Of course, the heart of our parish life is the Sunday Mass, and, during this time, the way that we celebrate Sunday as a community will have to undergo some changes. On March 17, to combat the spread of the virus, Bishop Vasquez suspended the public celebration of Mass in our diocese, and Travis county authorities imposed a limit of ten persons on all community gatherings.

During this time, it is important that we continue to observe the Lord's Day as a community, and we are committed to doing everything we can to help families and individuals continue to nourish their spiritual lives. Every Sunday, Mass will be celebrated in the Church at 9:30 in English and 11:00 in Spanish with only a small number of liturgical ministers present. These Masses will include both music and a homily, and will be live streamed on our Facebook page and website. Families and individuals will be able to view these Masses, and will also be able to access the recordings afterwards.

Even though the community will not be able to gather physically for Mass, our continuing to gather virtually will help us to maintain the bonds of faith and charity that keep our parish community strong. In addition to streaming the Mass, we will also soon make available on our parish website some additional resources to help families celebrate Sunday together at home.

Responding to this pandemic will also necessitate other changes to our parish life:

1. Daily Mass will be celebrated in the church privately for the time being. Although the community cannot gather, we should all remember that the Mass will continue to be offered for the Church and the world during this difficult time. A live video of daily Mass will be available.
2. We will continue to offer confessions at the normal times, reorganizing the logistics of hearing confessions in such a way as to observe the necessary social distancing.
3. Baptisms, funerals, and weddings which are celebrated at this time will take place privately, observing the regulations of the public health authorities about the number of people that may be present (currently 10).

4. Until further notice, all ministries and classes on our campus are canceled. If the number of persons allowed to gather is raised by the public health authorities, we will reconsider whether some smaller ministries may be able to meet.

5. Our religious education program will transition to distance education for at least as long as Pflugerville ISD remains closed.

6. The parish office will continue to remain open, and the priests will continue to be available to respond to individual pastoral needs.

7. Some of you have asked how you can continue to support the parish financially during this time. Although we will not be taking up collections at Mass, you can continue to support the parish either by mailing in or dropping off your envelopes, or by signing up for our eGiving program on our website, www.stelizabethpf.org

Thank you for your prayers and support. Rest assured you are in our prayers as well. This time of crisis will certainly present challenges to our life as a parish community, but we know that Our Lord is with us, even in the midst of trials. During this time, let us remain closely united to each other in prayer and in faith, trusting in the Lord to be our strength.

Let us pray together:

O God, our refuge in trials, our strength in sickness, our comfort in sorrow, spare your people, we pray, that through this affliction, they may find relief at last through your loving mercy. We ask this through the intercession of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, patroness of our parish, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, patroness of our diocese, and Saint Joseph, patron of the universal Church. Amen.

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Juan Carlos Lopez, Pastor

Rev. Doug Jeffers, Parochial Vicar