

My Dear SFDS Family,

First of all, I want to express my deep appreciation to you for during this very challenging time in the life of our Nation and World. It is encouraging and heartening to see so many of you living out your faith in real-time!

As a result of the Coronavirus, we as a church are experiencing issues we would never have anticipated only a few short weeks ago. We have already made decisions that became outdated only the next day due to announcements from our President.

As you know, many businesses have either closed or have cut hours drastically to limit contact between employees and customers.

While this whole thing “goes against the grain” of what we as a church are all about, we believe it is time to be good neighbors in our community.

Here is an important reminder: The CHURCH is the PEOPLE! The Building is a BUILDING where the Church usually meets! For now, we're just going to do things a bit differently.

With this in mind, we are going to take the following course of action:

1. Effective immediately, March 18, 2020, the public celebration of all weekday and Sunday Masses will be suspended. There is opportunity to view Masses either through network television or other live stream options over internet:
<https://www.archgh.org/news-data/latest-news/parishes-streaming-masses-live-online/>
or <https://www.ewtn.com/tv>
2. Sunday is still the Lord's Day. Families should gather to pray, read scripture, recite the Rosary and reflect together on their faith: <http://www.usccb.org/>
3. Our Church is remain open for individual and private prayer from 9AM – 5PM. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available upon request. Please call the office.
4. All services on site and functions will be cancelled until further noticed.
5. Please note that we will have someone available for you should you call the Church. Just call (713-774-7475) and leave a message if no one answers. We will do our best to respond ASAP.
6. We are going to be doing our best to explore ways we as a church can be a blessing in ministry to our community during this time. We don't just want to “hide out” but find safe and effective avenues to minister to others. If you have any ideas, don't hesitate to let us know.
7. Give as you are able and be obedient to God at this time. Giving options are available on our website, and of course, you may easily send your tithes and offerings through mail or drop it by the church.

We are going to come THROUGH this and will have greater victory on the other side! It's time to pray and seek God for answers, yet, we must use wisdom and again, be a good neighbor.

I ask that we continue in prayer for a quick, lasting resolution to the pandemic.

I'm reminded of a wonderful Scripture in Psalms 46:1-4 “*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in distress. Thus, we do not fear, though earth be shaken and mountains quake to the depths of the sea, though its waters rage and foam and mountains totter at its surging. The Lord of hosts is with us; our stronghold is the God of Jacob*”. With all my heart, I believe we continue to serve a good God who has already been to “tomorrow” and knows “the rest of the

story". While we continue to have great faith in God, we also must use our God-given wisdom during these times.

Sincerely,

Fr. Joseph Son Thanh Phan, *Pastor*

Encouraging Scriptures

Proverbs 3:25-26 – *“Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin of the wicked when it comes, for the LORD will be your confidence and will keep your foot from being snared.”*

2 Tim. 1:7 – *“For God did not give us the spirit of fear; but rather of power, and love, and self-control.”*