



Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church

4020 Lomas Blvd. NE

Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110

505-265-5868

October 23, 2020

Dear Parishioners of Our Lady of Fatima,

The dramatic rise in the number of COVID-19 cases in New Mexico recently has prompted Archbishop John C. Wester to temporarily suspend the celebration of public Masses in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe after Sunday, October 25, 2020. A copy of his letter is enclosed. He arrived at this conclusion after determining that the threat posed by the virus was not compatible with our faith's dedication to the protection of human life, and suspending public Masses would reduce the opportunities for the virus to spread. We are all deeply saddened by this turn of events, having already gone through one period of church closures because of the pandemic. Please allow me to identify some key points:

1. All public Masses - both Sunday and weekday - are canceled after October 25th until further notice. I will continue to celebrate a private Mass daily for the intentions of our parishioners, for an end to the pandemic, and for the specific intentions that had previously been requested by our parishioners.
2. Please note that **the dispensation from Sunday obligation issued by Archbishop Wester continues to remain in effect for all. For as long as the dispensation remains in effect, it is not a sin to miss Sunday Mass.**
3. At Our Lady of Fatima, we will continue to offer the streamed Mass on our parish website which is www.fatimachurchabq.org. The 5:30 pm Saturday Mass is recorded and then posted on the website. We will also post a streamed Mass for All Soul's Day, Thanksgiving, and even Christmas and New Year's (Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God) if public Masses are not yet permitted. A copy of the prayer for Spiritual Communion is enclosed with this letter. Masses will also be available on television and other websites.
4. Confessions are also being suspended. We may bring back "drive-thru" confessions on Saturdays. Check the parish web site or our sign on Lomas Blvd. for notice of drive-thru confessions.
5. The Parish Office will be staffed for reduced hours, from 8:00 am to 1:00 pm, Monday through Friday to answer your calls. You may call (505) 265-5868 or email us at OLOFatima_abq9@archdiosf.org. You may leave a voicemail if you call after 1:00 pm or on weekends. We request that you not come to the Parish Office in person without calling first.

6. As you can read in the Archbishop's letter, funerals are limited to "funerals outside of Mass" and attendance is limited to ten persons only. We can also do a graveside service.
7. First Reconciliation had been scheduled for Tuesday, December 1, 2020, but that will be re-scheduled if necessary. Persons enrolled in CCD, Confirmation, and RCIA will be notified as to how their faith formation will continue.
8. Our primary way to communicate changes with our parishioners will be through our website of www.fatimachurchabq.org. The website will contain notices of updates and also a copy of the weekly bulletin. If you do not have internet access and would like to receive the weekly bulletin by mail, please call the Parish Office.
9. We would appreciate your prayers and continued financial support to maintain our facilities until we can have public Masses once again. Offertory envelopes may be sent in by mail, dropped off at the parish office in our secure mailbox, or use the on-line giving available on our parish website.

Finally, I wish to thank you – our parishioners – for your continued prayers and support. These are, indeed, challenging times, and I am so grateful for your encouragement. I understand that these changes can be frustrating, but please believe that my underlying goal is obedience to our Archbishop, the safeguarding of your health, and providing for your spiritual needs to the very best of my ability. Please be patient as Fr. John Trambley, Deacon Anthony Ezeaputa, and I adapt to the changing circumstances. May God bless you and keep you safe, and let us pray for one another.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Stephen Schultz

Very Rev. Stephen Schultz, Pastor

An Act of Spiritual Communion recommended by St. Alphonsus Liguori:

My Jesus, I believe that you are in the Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.