

St Louis de Monfort had a great devotion to our Virgin Mother Mary. His classic book: "True Devotion to Mary" should be read by every Catholic. Devotion to Mary in these times of stress is important, for as it is said in the Memorare - **"Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided."** Especially as we approach May, the month of Mary, we need to plead to Our Lady for her intercession. Pray the rosary daily.

The latest news from Bishop Brennan, today, is that, unfortunately, **public Masses will be suspended until the end of May.** (See the letter at the bottom.)

Finally a bit of good news, the Diocese has allowed for confessions by appointment. We are planning to start with a 1 hour session before the Saturday Mass next weekend, May 9. Time slots will start at 3:30. We can expand as needed. Please call the office (740-754-2221, M-F 9-noon) to schedule a 5 minute time slot for each confession. Confession will be in the St Francis Chapel at St Marys. Confession will be anonymous, the priest will sit with his back to the person who can stand or sit. Please stay outside until your time to ensure privacy for all. Fr Stachura will be the priest. Please read this guide from the Diocese.

A Guide for Making Your Confession During These Extraordinary Times

1 – DO make an appointment to have your confession heard as confessions are scheduled in advance. **2 – DO NOT "show up" without an appointment** in fairness to everyone who schedules their confession appointment in advance. **3 – DO stay at home** if you are ill with anything contagious, especially if you are showing symptoms of the COVID-19 coronavirus. There will be other opportunities to have your confession heard when you are well. **4 – DO take your temperature** before leaving home for confessions; if you have a temperature above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit (the threshold "symptomatic" temperature for potential coronavirus) please do not come to confessions; wait until you are healthy. **5 – DO stay at home** if you are of an age or have other factors that put you in the "high risk" category for getting the COVID-19 coronavirus. There will be opportunities to have your confession heard in the future. **6 – DO use your own hand sanitizer and wear a mask** when you arrive for confession. **7 – DO arrive no more than 5 MINUTES before your confession appointment** in order to avoid starting a line. **8 – DO prepare for your confession at home** – you will have only **5 MINUTES** to have your confession heard given

these extraordinary times. **9 – DO keep your confession brief** – succinctly confess your sins. **10 – DO NOT use this opportunity for confession to seek counseling.** If you need to speak with a priest about counseling on a particular issue in your life please make an appointment to discuss this with him outside of the confession setting.

CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF OHIO

April 28, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Yesterday, 27 April 2020, Governor Mike DeWine presented a strategy to begin a multi-phased plan, even while the executive “Stay at Home Order” remains in place. His plan begins a process for Ohioans gradually to return to work and daily activity and provides hope and evidence that our cooperation with the governor’s orders has significantly curbed the spread of the virus. We thank you for and admire the patience, cooperation and understanding you have already shown during this COVID-19 pandemic. We realize the frustration, sadness, and loss the faithful felt not to be able to gather personally to celebrate the Paschal Mysteries during the Sacred Triduum and each Sunday. During this time of sacrifice and longing, we have joined our prayers and hearts to yours, trusting that God will see us through this pandemic and reunite us at the Eucharistic Feast. Out of deep concern for the common good as well as the physical and spiritual well-being of all the people of Ohio, the Catholic Bishops of Ohio have agreed once again to cooperate with the governor, and to support and abide by the multi-phased approach to returning to work and eventual public gathering in large groups.

To that end, the Catholic Bishops of Ohio **extend the temporary suspension of all publicly celebrated Masses/liturgies ending on May 29th**, with the hope of publicly celebrating together the Solemnity of Pentecost on the weekend of May 30/31. Each of the bishops of Ohio, once again, dispense the Catholic faithful who reside in their respective dioceses and all other Catholics currently in their territories from the obligation of attending Sunday Mass during this time. We ask for the cooperation and adherence of all the faithful to the governor’s directives during this period.

We will be working diligently with our pastoral teams to consider reasonable, gradual and responsible initiatives for welcoming back the faithful in time to Sunday Mass, initiatives which will renew our love for the Holy Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and which will help us to restore Catholic life and invite others to share that life after the pandemic. We encourage individual dioceses and their respective pastors and parishioners to begin to work to establish plans which respect social distancing and other requirements for the safety of our people.

This decision has not been taken lightly and, as your bishops, together with you, we recognize the sacrifice we are called to make being physically distanced from the Holy Eucharist and from one another. We remain grateful for your understanding and prayerful support. As your bishops we continue to encourage you to keep holy the Lord's Day by participating in Sunday Mass by way of radio broadcast or televised or live streamed options and making a spiritual communion. Keeping in mind of the gift of plenary indulgences offered to us by the Church, we encourage all the faithful to turn to the Church's treasury of prayer, praying as a family or individually the Liturgy of the Hours, rosary, divine mercy chaplet, and Stations of the Cross, etc.

Together we continue to pray for all who are suffering from Covid19, for all health care workers and first responders, for all the deceased and their families, and for an easing of the anxiety and tension caused by this pandemic. Relying on the Motherly care of Our Lady, Health of the Sick, we unite our sufferings to those of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and we trust in the glorious hope of His Resurrection .

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