

Dear Friends and Family of Holy Nativity Catholic Church,

On Tuesday I learned that the Dioceses of Tucson and Phoenix had suspended public celebration of the Mass until the 6<sup>th</sup> of April. At that time I was forced to consider the ramifications of attempting to keep “business as usual” and as I did, I saw the faces of those whose health may not withstand a concerted attack by any virus, let alone one about which we know so little. At that time also the rule was handed down that there would be a limit on the size of gatherings of any sort. It seemed prudent at the time to join with St. Philips and the Diocese of Tucson to suspend the public celebration of the Mass and all other Parish activities that are on the schedule. On Wednesday I received a letter from Bishop Lopes affirming this decision by directing the suspension of public Masses and parish activities until “further notice”.

I find it appropriate that this should happen during the season of Lent. To quote many that I have seen on Facebook, I didn’t expect to give this much up for Lent. I encourage each of us to consider this a time of intense growth. Lately, I have encouraged each member of our congregation to make the faith their own! This is only possible when you each take the initiative to read Sacred Scripture each day and pray over the readings. Pray for one another, and please, pray for me. At the end of the scripture readings, pray the Prayer of Humble Access, or the Anima Christi. Say a family rosary. Watch the Mass on TV or listen to it on Catholic Radio. Starting on Monday, my weekday private Mass will be aired at noon on 98.9 FM. Make a Spiritual Act of Communion while the priest is receiving the Eucharist. In doing these things you are taking personal responsibility for your spiritual growth and will emerge from this time stronger than ever.

Confessions will resume, with a twist. Weather permitting, I will be in the parking lot of the church at the usual weekday times and we will have “drive-through” confessions. Please ensure that you come alone in your car to ensure your privacy.

Finally, Intentions. Please, call, email or text your intentions to me so that I can carry them to the Altar with me. Each Mass is for the spiritual defense of our community, knowing your intentions keeps me from shadow boxing with the enemy.

Blessings in Christ,

Fr. Vieira