



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF
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NEWS

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**Bishop David Zubik Releases Pastoral Letter: “The Other Side of Corona”;
Announces Details of Day of Fasting and Day of Prayer**

Bishop David Zubik has released his Pastoral Letter: “The Other Side of Corona” in response to fears, worries, and anxieties surrounding the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

In his letter, the Bishop invites people to reflect on a hope-filled definition of the word “corona”. For Catholics, the word corona traditionally means the crown of Mary, Mother of Jesus. *“Corona is a sign that God is with us through everything we experience in life, wherever we are, whatever we do, whoever we are! We are never alone,”* Bishop Zubik said.

The Bishop also calls people to think of this time as an opportunity to pray most fervently. *“A time of dramatic action that affects our daily lives—closure of business, working from home, cancellation of school, a suspension of most Church activities, particularly the celebration of public Masses—and even a self-quarantine or the loss of employment—is an opportunity to deepen our relationship with Jesus,”* he said.

“The Other Side of Corona” highlights examples of prayers that focus on asking God for support and healing, including that *“God may protect us from a spread of the virus. That God may extend His love and care for others through us, and that God may comfort all of us whose lives are disrupted in the path of the virus.”*

In the letter, Bishop Zubik refers to having to make an announcement on March 15, 2020, that “broke his heart”; suspending public Mass in the Diocese of Pittsburgh until further notice in an effort to follow health guidelines and protect people from the spread of COVID-19. *“As painful as it is to be deprived of the Mass, we are followers of the Great Physician who would never want us to risk making others seriously ill,”* the Bishop said.

A variety of alternative ways to pray, worship, and live the Catholic faith are also included in the Pastoral Letter. It can be downloaded at the Diocese of Pittsburgh website (<https://diopitt.org/the-other-side-of-corona>).

Special Days of Fasting and Prayer in the Diocese of Pittsburgh

Tuesday, March 24, 2020: Day of Fasting

Bishop Zubik has announced a Day of Fasting for protection against the coronavirus and for all who are suffering in its wake.

Wednesday, March 25, 2020, The Feast of the Annunciation: Day of Prayer

A number of suggestions and resources for that day are listed on the diocesan website (<https://diopitt.org/day-of-fasting-and-prayer>).

“I chose this particular day because it is on that day that we remember the Archangel Gabriel’s revelation to the Virgin Mary that she would be the mother of Jesus. That announcement brought great disruption, hardship and fear into the life of Mary—and Joseph too. Yet they responded with a faith that led to our salvation. Being able to identify with their disruption, hardship and fear, my hope is that we can all imitate their response with faith too!” Bishop Zubik said.