

St Mary of the Pines Catholic Church

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March 16, 2020

Dear beloved parishioners of St. Mary of the Pines and Sacred Heart Churches, God is good...all the time! As you are aware that all public liturgical celebrations and religious gatherings have been suspended in our diocese, until further notice, I write to encourage you to not give up: keep the faith; pray hard; take precautions and be safe as we strive to contain the coronavirus pandemic.

I also want to assure you that I will celebrate Mass (in private) every day and offer all our intentions – and particularly all the forwarded daily intentions – for our two churches. We may not be able to gather in the church (the place of worship) and the pews may be empty when I am celebrating Mass without a congregation, but the Church (we as the body of Christ) is never empty: we, the pilgrim church, are always united with both the suffering and the triumphant church whenever we celebrate our liturgies. Even more than that, Our Lord Jesus Christ is always present to us and within us: He promised to be always with us until the end of time! (Jesus is ever faithful to his promises). Remember that whenever the priest celebrates Mass, with or without a congregation, he is always offering the Sacrifice of the Eucharist to God the Father on behalf of all the People of God (and on his own behalf).

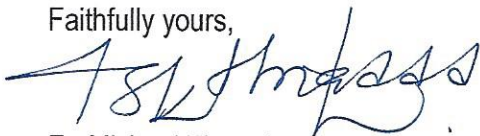
Inasmuch as we will not have public celebration of the Eucharist, remember we are always a Eucharistic People: continue living out your lives in close relationship with God and with one another; in prayers, compassionate and kind thoughts, and love. Remember to keep the Lord's Day holy by refraining from work and reaching out to others through prayer and service: please check on our elderly parishioners and neighbors and, if you are able, assist them, if need be, with routine matters so that they do not have to get out of their homes.

I entreat you to continue observing the remaining part of the Lenten Season with prayer, fasting, and almsgiving: take this time to pray for God's intervention and grace as we battle this Coronavirus epidemic. I believe this panicky and scary situation we are in will be over and we will be able to gather again in the House of the Lord with renewed faith and hearts full of thanksgiving and worship.

I am readily available for anyone who is seriously sick and in need of the Sacrament of the Sick and the dying. Please call or visit the office for any pastoral need. Pray for me! Be assured of my continuous prayers. We pray and hope and trust!

Please visit our website for daily reflections under "From Pastor's Desk" at homepage. Blessings!

Faithfully yours,



Fr. Michael Thang'wa
Pastor

FR. Michael Thang'wa

PS: I know the situation we are in has economic implications as well: we pray that God will continue to sustain us from his abundance. Please continue to support our parish financially – through tithing or otherwise – so that we can continue to run smoothly. *(On a light note: please keep the envelopes coming and when the Coronavirus storm has passed by, we are sure to come back in good health to functional facilities and a healthy pastor, ready to rock and roll in the Holy Spirit).*