

St. Mary Parish Response to the Coronavirus

March 13, 2020

St. Mary Church, in response to directives from the Diocese of Cleveland and local, state and national health care agencies, is instituting the following guidelines to keep you safe during this COVID 19 / FLU season. While the number of cases may be small, and far less than the normal flu which can also be very serious, our senior population and those with underlying health conditions are at most risk. Proper precautions must be taken so that this epidemic does not become more widespread. We are asking for your cooperation with this response for the sake of charity to each other. We will be updating this response as needed. Please visit the below websites for more information.

<https://www.dioceseofcleveland.org/information-and-guidance>

www.cdc.gov

<https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/>

<https://www.scpd.org/news>

<https://www.hudson.oh.us/>

If you are ill, the best thing that you can do is PLEASE STAY HOME!

If you do not have access to food / supplies, please reach out to our Parish Nurse, Lori Joseph, at 330.653.8118 ext. 233 or ljoseph@stmaryhudson.cc and she will arrange to help with immediate needs.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

Wash hands often throughout the day with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds (say two Hail Marys or sing Happy Birthday To You twice). Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

If you cough or sneeze, do so with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and then wash your hands. Do not reuse that tissue – one and done!

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces. This includes door knobs, light switches and other shared surfaces.

Staying hydrated, eating a healthy diet, getting enough sleep and exercising can help your body maintain health and fight illness.

Our practices at St. Mary that have changed to protect you include:

- ◆ Holy water blessing fonts and the baptism pool have been drained – you are still encouraged to make the sign of the cross and genuflect when entering the church.
- ◆ **On a temporary basis the hymnals have been removed from the benches and a worship aid will be provided each weekend.**
- ◆ Our maintenance department will be cleaning handles and door plates after each Mass.

- ◆ A Sign of Peace WITHOUT physical contact is strongly encouraged. Hands may be clasped and a nod of “Peace Be with You” made to those around you.
- ◆ Our priests, deacons and Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers of Holy Communion have always washed their hands with soap and water prior to Mass. In addition to this, our Extraordinary Ministers have always used hand sanitizer before distributing communion and now will use it after distributing Holy Communion.

Distribution of Holy Communion:

- ◆ The distribution of the Precious Blood has been temporarily suspended.
- ◆ For those individuals suffering from celiac disease or other medical conditions preventing them from receiving the consecrated host, a chalice of Precious Blood will be available. We ask that all others please refrain from receiving from that chalice. That EMHC will be positioned by the Blessed Mother statue – and has been instructed to ask each individual who comes to that station if they have received a consecrated host.
- ◆ While the option of receiving the Body of Christ on the tongue or in the hand remains that of the individual, it is requested that, out of charitable concern, communicants who are accustomed to receiving the Body of Christ on the tongue, please receive the Body of Christ in the hand until the COVID-19 public health crisis has passed. Those who nevertheless insist on receiving on the tongue are asked to please receive Communion only from the priest or deacon.

Following the directives of Governor DeWine, ALL activities/ministries at St. Mary Parish are cancelled through Friday, April 3, 2020 – this includes the Friday seafood dinners. Please check the parish website, www.stmaryhudson.cc for updates.

Daily and Weekend Masses (Saturday Vigil Mass and All Sunday Masses) and Confessions will continue to be celebrated at our usual times. **Catholics who reside in Ohio and all other Catholics currently in Ohio are not obligated to attend Sunday Mass on the weekends of March 14-15, March 21-22 and March 28-29.**

Out of charity and concern for our brothers and sisters in Christ, **the Catholic bishops of Ohio encourage all the faithful, particularly those who are sick, experiencing symptoms of illness, or are at risk of illness to seriously consider refraining from Mass attendance.**

The church will remain open for private prayer as usual Monday through Friday until 7:00 p.m. All parish activities except for Mass and Eucharistic Adoration will be cancelled through Friday, April 3. PSR, EDGE, LIFE TEEN and Preschool will be in contact with families to keep them updated and in touch.

Even though we are not obligated to attend Mass at this time, we remind you that expenses of St. Mary Parish continue, please be as faithful to your tithe as able.

Let us all pray for one another’s health and protection as we continue to carry out our daily responsibilities of being Jesus to those we come in contact with daily. Pray for all who are suffering from illness or disease of any kind, and for the easing of the tension caused by this situation. Mary Our Lady of Lourdes, health of the sick and Mother of Mercy, intercede for us, and may the Holy Spirit continue to guide and protect us all.

The Parish Office will remain open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.