

## ST. LOUIS CATHOLIC CHURCH

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March 25, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As you know, we are in the midst of a public health crisis that has presented unprecedented challenges to the civic leadership of the nations of the world and to the leaders of the Church as they seek to protect the health and the lives of their people. I never would have imagined that the entire state of Indiana would be put under lockdown, and I certainly never would have imagined that we would be subject to conditions that would result in the need to suspend public Masses and other sacraments as well as the closure of the church building for an indefinite period of time.

I want to share with you Archbishop Thompson's policies governing our parish and all of the parishes of the Archdiocese during this this time. Until further notice, the following policies will be in force at St. Louis parish in obedience to the Archbishop:

- Given the need to encourage people to remain in their homes, particularly the most vulnerable, no public gathering of the faithful should take place at this time. **This includes gatherings that take place outside or in parking lots, even if people remain in their cars. This would include celebration of Mass by loudspeaker or FM transmitter, distribution of Holy Communion in the parking lot or in cars, drive up confessions, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction, or even gatherings for prayer and the rosary.** We certainly encourage the creative ways of offering prayer and sustaining a sense of community via social media and other forms of communication.
- **All churches and gathering spaces are closed and should not be left open for private prayer or gatherings.**
- **Reception of Holy Communion should only be offered in the context of Viaticum for those in danger of death. Out of concern for the health of our homebound, deacons and the lay faithful should not make pastoral visits to the homebound or those in health care communities. Holy Communion should not be brought to the faithful in their homes outside of the giving of Viaticum.**
- The most recent developments mean that the previous policies on funerals and weddings remain in effect. With growing uncertainty and the need to protect the health of others, weddings in particular should be postponed or rescheduled if possible to a later date. Any exception to this should only be offered after consultation with the relevant Archdiocesan officials.

This is surely a time of great spiritual challenges, and I ask that we, as a parish family, respond to these challenges with faith and charity. Let us pray in our homes and in our families for all those

who have been infected with the Corona virus, especially those who are seriously ill or those who have died. Let us pray to God that He may quickly bring this pandemic to an end. Let us seek to offer whatever spiritual or physical aid that we are able to those who are afflicted by this disease.

I want you to know that Fr. Santhosh and myself have been celebrating Mass for the intentions of our parishioners. We now have the capability to make videos of the Masses we celebrate, and they may be viewed on our parish and school You Tube channel, which may be found at the following web address: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtnV2rrxf6XnfYAyHFloAhA>. We have also made arrangements to broadcast the Sunday Mass on ETC's new "Good News Chanel," 905. This Mass will be broadcast on Sundays at 11:30am. Those who view these Masses participate and make a spiritual communion with them by offering the following prayer, ***"My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen."***

I want to assure you that Fr. Santhosh and I will be available to offer the sacrament of the sick and reconciliation to those who are in imminent danger of death. Please know that Fr. Santhosh and I will keep all of you in our prayers, and we ask that you keep us in yours, as we face this crisis together.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Stan