

March 17, 2020

Dear Parish Families,

These are troubling times for many people and ones that call for drastic measures to protect the health and safety of the faithful. Archbishop Thompson has now put into place measures to address the global pandemic of coronavirus. Trusting in God and following the guidance of experts in the fields of health and safety the following actions are hereby out into place effective March 18:

- All public Sunday and Weekdays Masses, along with all other parish liturgical services and gatherings of the faithful are suspended until further notice.
- Priests will continue to offer Mass privately for the good of the People of God, the Church, and the intentions of the day. At St. Michael and St. Peter I will be using the Mass intentions that have been previously scheduled. If you have any questions, please contact the Parish Office.
- The faithful can remain connected to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass by viewing televised and online Masses. I am looking into the possibility of live streaming a Mass for our Brookville parishes. In the meantime you can view daily Mass at Bishop Robert Barron's Word on Fire Ministry at <https://www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass>
- During a time of prayer on Sunday or while viewing the Mass on television or online, the faithful are encouraged to make an act of Spiritual Communion. This beautiful devotional practice is a source of grace and allows us to grow in our appreciation for the gift of the Eucharist. Here is an example of a prayer for spiritual communion:

*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, I ask You to spiritually come into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and untie myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.*

- Out of an abundance of caution, parishes and chapels, including perpetual adoration chapels, are to remain closed until further notice.
- Decisions regarding Holy Week celebrations and Easter Sunday will be made in the coming days.
- The celebration of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Matrimony are suspended until further notice.
- Regular scheduled visits to the homebound and other vulnerable persons is suspended until further notice.

- More information will be forthcoming regarding the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Anointing of the Sick.
- The celebration of funerals is suspended whenever possible. If a funeral is offered, it should be celebrated without a Mass and in the presence of no more than 10 members of the faithful. A Mass for the intention and the repose of the soul of the deceased may be offered by the priest.
- The Catholic Center in Indianapolis and its agencies are closed until further notice.

For the parishes of St. Michael and St. Peter I have made the following decisions:

- The Parish Office is closed until further notice. Our staff will be working remotely from home. Anyone needing to contact the office should leave a phone or email message and it will be returned in a timely manner.
- All activities are canceled. This includes RCIA, Stations of the Cross, Bible Study, parish organizations, small prayer group gatherings, Palm Sunday Breakfast, all regular scheduled meetings, Baptismal Prep Class, etc.
- If you have a baptism or wedding scheduled in the immediate future please contact the Parish Office.
- School remains closed until at least April 13.
- The parish will continue to financially compensate all employees for the foreseeable future. Your on-going financial support of our parishes is needed now more than ever. Please continue to share your Stewardship of Treasure by mailing in your envelopes, dropping them off at the Parish Office at St. Michael, or utilize online giving.
- Please stay connected with our parishes via our website and social media. Updates will be posted as they develop.

These are uncertain times for all of us and the one thing we need now more than ever is stay connected with God. Pope Francis has stated, "In this pandemic situation, in which we find ourselves living more or less isolated, we are invited to rediscover and deepen the value of the communion which unites all members of the Church. United with Christ we are never alone, but we form a single Body, of which He is the Head."

Invoking the intercession of Mary I am asking all parishioners to commit to praying the Rosary for nine consecutive days starting today, concluding on March 25, the Feast of the Annunciation. Our Mother is a powerful ally against anything that threatens us, including the coronavirus. Let us implore her protection.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Fr. Vincent P. Lampert