

UPDATED March 19, 2020

St. James Parish Response to the Coronavirus Pandemic

The following summary reflects the ongoing changes to parish liturgies and events, effective March 19, 2020. These decisions have been made, in obedience to the directives of Bishop Gainer, in compliance with government decisions, and out of prudence due to the serious nature of the coronavirus pandemic. These precautions will regularly be evaluated and updated.

Let us pray and fast for the swift end to this public health situation, for the health and well-being of all medical personnel and care givers and for the recovery of health for the sick.

Our Lady, health of the sick, pray for us! St. James, pray for us! Blessed Seelos, pray for us.

PARISH BUILDING ACCESS

Effective March 18, 2020 and until further notice, **the parish buildings are closed** to all but parish employees.

COMMUNICATIONS

Parish communications will be via email (to those who have provided current emails to us) and **the parish website** (www.stjameslititz.org). Changes and updates will be posted to the website and emailed to parishioners for the foreseeable future.

For parishioners who do not have access to the internet nor email, periodic updates will be mailed to your home – **provided you have notified the Parish Office of this need**. Please see the response form on the back of Father O’Blaney’s letter.

The **parish bulletin** will be emailed to each household having an email on record with the parish on Friday afternoon and posted to the parish website, as has been our custom. A limited amount of paper copies of the bulletin will be available outside the door on a cart underneath the Narthex entrance canopy.

The **parish office** will continue to be open during normal weekly business hours (Monday-Friday from 8AM-4PM). Please tell us how we may assist you, by using email and the phone. Here is the contact information for the parish administrative staff.

Web Page	www.stjameslititz.org
Father O’Blaney	717-626-5580 x4
Parish Office	717-626-5580 x2
Parish RE Office	717-626-0244
After Hours Emergency	717-341-5393

Emails

tarmstrong@hbgdiocese.org
rbarnas@hbgdiocese.org
mblodgett@hbgdiocese.org
DKDipaola@hbgdiocese.org
cfeldman@hbgdiocese.org
frjoblaney@hbgdiocese.org

jowsinski@hbgdiocese.org
towsinski@hbgdiocese.org
pquinn@hbgdiocese.org
rreynolds@hbgdiocese.org
tsiegrist@hbgdiocese.org
frjtizio@hbgdiocese.org

THE MASS and DEVOTIONS

- Bishop Gainer has extended a dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass (including Saturday evening Mass) until further notice. **However, parishioners are encouraged to participate in Mass by accessing the service via the internet or watching it on TV.**
- St. James will offer Sunday Mass on Saturday at 5PM and Sunday at 7:30AM, which will be live streamed at: <https://www.stjameslititz.org/liturgy>.
- The Mass is also available live streamed at other times, from other Catholic parishes in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg. A listing of the times and websites is available at <https://www.hbgdiocese.org/coronavirus/#parishes-live-streaming-mass>.
- Mass is also available on **EWTN.com**, <http://www.catholicv.org/masses>; and thesundaymass.org.
- Absent an opportunity to participate in any of these Mass celebrations, a Family Prayer service, to keep Sunday holy for the Lord, has been placed on the parish website.
- Daily Mass will be celebrated at 9:00 AM, Monday-Saturday, and will be live streamed at: <https://www.stjameslititz.org/liturgy>.
- Bishop Gainer has now advised the priests that, for Masses that are live streamed, they are permitted to have a only 2 lay ministers (Sacristan and Lector) participate.
- **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament** on Thursdays and **Stations of the Cross** on Fridays have been suspended until further notice. Please see our parish website for links to these devotions that can be accessed on-line.
- The **Lenten Penance Service**, scheduled for Tuesday, April 2, 2020 at 7PM has been cancelled.
- The availability of the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** has been suspended until further notice. By direction of Bishop Gainer, priests are to hear Confessions only in extreme emergency, when a person is in danger of death.
- **Visitation to the home-bound and ill** has been suspended until further notice. **The exception to this policy is if a person is in danger of death. In this case, a priest should be called immediately (see contact numbers above).**
- Until further notice, **Baptisms** and the **Sacrament of Matrimony** will only take place under exceptional circumstances. Should either of these Sacraments be scheduled, **no more than 10 people can be in attendance at the service.**
- **Funeral Masses** are suspended until further notice. Prayer services at an alternate place should not exceed ten people. Grave site services may be conducted. Bishop Gainer suggests that memorial Masses be held after the pandemic is over.

- Bottles of **Holy Water** are available to parishioners. If you want a bottle, please call the parish office.
- **Prayer aids** will be placed on a cart outside of the Narthex entrance during the day, should any parishioner want to use them.

FAITH FORMATION

- **Religious Education classes and all related events through Easter Sunday** have been suspended, effective Sunday, March 15, 2020. Class material for each grade level has been posted to the parish website. **Students are expected to complete the lessons and return related worksheets at their next scheduled RE class (date to be determined).** Supplemental information and video links have also been posted to the website under <https://www.stjameslititz.org/religious-education>.
- **Sip & Dip** has been suspended until further notice.
- **IMPACT YOUTH Ministry** are suspended until further notice
- **That Man Is You (TMIY)** is suspended until further notice. Stay tuned for possible streaming capabilities.
- **Walking With Purpose (WWP)** is suspended until further notice.
- All **remaining Bible studies** are suspended until further notice.
- **St. Jimmy's Jamboree**, held on Thursday mornings, is suspended until further notice.
- **Pray & Play**, held on Sunday mornings during the 11AM Mass, is suspended until further notice.

PARISH EVENTS

- **St. James Parish Bingo**, held Monday evenings, has been cancelled through the end of March 2020.
- **Stewardship Sunday**, scheduled for Sunday, March 22, 2020, after all Masses, has been cancelled and will be rescheduled for September 2020. All ministries should continue their preparation for this event. More information for the participating ministries will be forthcoming in the next week.
- **The Respect Life Breakfast**, scheduled for Sunday, March 29, 2020, has been cancelled and may be rescheduled after the pandemic is over.
- **The Boy Scout Pancake Breakfast**, scheduled for Saturday and Sunday, March 21 & 22, 2020, has been cancelled.
- **Boy Scout** and **Girl Scout** events and meetings at St. James Parish have been suspended until further notice.

- **Meetings of all parish organizations and affiliated organizations** in St. James Parish facilities have been suspended until further notice.
- Use of St. James facilities by all **community organizations** has been suspended until further notice.

DIOCESAN EVENTS

- **The Diocesan Men's Conference**, scheduled for Saturday, March 28, 2020, has been cancelled.
- The **Solemn Lenten Vespers** with Acknowledgement of Candidates on Sunday, March 22, 2020, has been cancelled.
- The **RCIA Lenten Retreat** on Saturday, April 4, 2020, has been cancelled.
- All **celebrations of the Sacrament of Confirmation** scheduled between March 16 and April 15 are to be rescheduled by the pastors of the parishes for a later date. **This will not affect St. James**, as our Confirmation Mass is scheduled for Thursday, May 7, 2020.
- The **Chrism Mass** on Monday, April 6, 2020, has been cancelled. Arrangements for distribution of Holy Oils to the parishes have been made.
- No decision has been made by Bishop Gainer yet, regarding other **Holy Week** services.

OTHER

- We normally would be in the middle of our **Social Justice Network (SJN) Easter Project** at this time. As you may recall, the Easter Project assists our parish families in need by providing additional food for Easter meals. The Easter Project Committee is meeting this week, to define creative ways that our parish can support this important ministry in view of the pandemic. Stay tuned for their decision!
- Parishioners are asked to continue to make their **weekly contributions**, in support of St. James Parish. The weekly collection provides for the operation of our parish. Parish bills continue to come due – just like your household bills do—even if we have reduced operations or lower parish Mass attendance (in person). Offerings can be made through ACH on-line banking, by USPS mail, or by clicking the **on-line Parish Giving Link** at www.stjameslititz.org.
- **We are required to deep clean the church building. We will be doing this prior to re-opening the church, once the pandemic is over.** The help of volunteers to assist the staff in completing this task will be appreciated. If anyone is willing and able to assist with this task, please contact the parish office.
- The use of the **St. James Pavilion** is available by calling the parish office to reserve it.
- Please call the parish office if you have a need not addressed in this summary. This includes assistance with food, transportation, or other items.