

Pastoral Letter to the People of the Diocese of Las Vegas

March 18, 2020

My Dear Friends in Christ,

People across the entire globe have been plunged into a world of hardship and uncertainty as the coronavirus continues to take its toll in every nation.

As individuals and families, we are facing the specter of critical illness, certain economic hardship, and the massive disruption of our daily lives.

The Church is no stranger to adversity, suffering, or privation.

In times of difficulty, she has always raised her voice in prayer and earnest supplication, confident that God will hear our every prayer and answer all our pleas.

Down through the centuries, the Blessed Mother has played a vitally important role in times of trial, coming to us as a tender Mother, a tireless advocate, steadfast

Intercessor, and cherished friend.

She has visited her people under the familiar titles of Virgin of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Antipolo, and Our Lady of La Vang.

She is beloved in Poland as Our Lady of Czestochowa, in Ireland as Our Lady of Knock, and in Japan as Our Lady of Akita.

Mary is revered by the people in Bosnia–Herzegovina as Our Lady of Medugorje, and in Spain, she is treasured as Our Lady of the Pillar. Mary is known in France as Our Lady of Lourdes, and in Portugal as Our Lady of Fatima.

On May 13, 1846, the Bishops of the United States unanimously chose the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Patroness of our Nation. Their decision was ratified by Pope Pius IX on February 7 of the following year.

Now is the hour to turn to our Blessed Mother for her maternal help. She is always ready and willing to carry our prayers and petitions to the heart of her Son.

Mary's own words, contained in the Gospel of St. Luke, capture the special place that she holds in salvation history as the advocate and friend of God's holy people. The Scripture says, "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord; my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed."

I ask you, the people of the Diocese of Las Vegas, to turn to the Blessed Mother, who helps us keep the eyes of our hearts fixed on her Son Jesus during dark and trying days.

The words of a powerful prayer called the Memorare, and attributed to St. Bernard, assure us that when we turn to Mary in times of need we have this blessed assurance -- that never was it known that anyone who fled to her protection, implored her help, or sought her intercession was left unaided.

When our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to Juan Diego, she posed to him a question that is intended also for you and me. Mary asked Juan Diego, "Am I not here, I who am your Mother?"

Her question is a not-so-subtle assurance that Mary is our Mother too, standing ready and willing to protect and defend us, her children, in times of trouble and uncertainty.

I ask you, the people of the Diocese of Las Vegas, to bring your troubles to Mary. Give

her your burdens, your worries. Share with her your cares and concerns. Be assured that under her maternal mantle, prayers are answered and miracles still happen. Mary will not forsake her children in their hour of need, nor will she neglect our prayers in times of difficulty and distress.

In the days ahead, I ask you to consider praying the Rosary as a family, and ask parents and grandparents to teach your children about the healing power of Mary's maternal care.

I ask all parishioners to pray the beautiful Memorare at the close of each day, directing your prayer toward those who are sick and suffering, those who have died, for healthcare workers and researchers, and for civic leaders, who are under particular duress during these trying days.

I ask you to invite Mary our Mother into your hearts and homes, and to venerate her as your loving Mother, as one who will lead you and your families closer to the heart of her Son.

Each Sunday, I ask you to consider reading the Sunday readings as a family, allowing the living Word of God to draw you into the heart of the Word made Flesh.

Finally, I commend our entire Diocese to the maternal care of Mary, entreating her to "pray for us, O Holy Mother of God," and protect our people with grace, peace, and temporal relief.

I close this reflection with the consoling words of St. Francis De Sales, who had deep devotion to Our Lady, and unfailing faith in God's Provident care. He wrote, "Do not fear what will happen tomorrow. The same loving God who cares for you today will care for you tomorrow and every day. God will either shield you from suffering or will give you the unfailing strength to bear it. Be at peace then and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginings."

Be certain of my daily prayers and blessings.

Bishop George Leo Thomas, Ph.D.
Bishop of Las Vegas



He is Risen, Alleluia!

Easter Blessings and Coronavirus (COVID-19) update.

March 19, 2020

My dear friends, as the situation surrounding COVID 19 continues to evolve, we know it has affected heavily on our daily routine, activities and interactions as faithful. So, we want to remind you, be not afraid. Our covenant with Christ is affirmed by His Sacred Paschal Triduum, that three-day celebration of the death and resurrection of the Lord. There we recall the past, summon the future and experience in the present all that is implied in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. It reminds us that we are on a pilgrimage to the new and eternal Jerusalem. I ask you all during these difficult days in the words of Our Holy Father Pope Francis on families to discover a new closeness and have more concrete relationships made of attention and patience. Ask the Lord to stop the pandemic: Lord stop it with your hand!

Reverend Lourdes Jayamanne

It is with great hope that we will all be together in Christ for Holy Week. Holy Thursday April 9th will be our first celebration due to the coronavirus. As you know things are changing daily and we may have changes to the Holy Week schedule also. This terrible situation is a wonderful opportunity for us to pray for all affected by this illness. This letter is to give you information about the changes to our Parish. For future updates please check the website, Facebook page or call the office.

Until the quarantine is lifted, Father Lourdes will be saying regularly scheduled Masses privately.

The office will be open as needed. If you would like to enter the Chapel to pray at a special time, please call 775-289-2201 and leave a message. If you have an emergency, please call Father Lourdes at 702-742-8875 or Gretchen Derbidge at 775-293-1464.

Your generous support of Sacred Heart Parish and St. Michael's Mission in the absence of gathering for worship is appreciated. Please mail in your offering to Sacred Heart Catholic Church P.O. Box 151026, Ely, NV 89315.

We have been contacted by Catholic Charities and are expecting a shipment of food next week. Please call the office to arrange for pick up or delivery if you are in need.

The Knights of Columbus have generously volunteered to distribute palms. They will be available to pick up on Saturday April 4th and Palm Sunday April 5th at a drive through stop in the church parking lot. Palm will be distributed during the hours of 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Please enter through the gates on East 11th street closest to David E. Norman Elementary.

We pray that the quarantine will end and bring renewal, hope and health to all the world. Currently, we are going forward with the scheduling of Holy Week Masses.

Holy Week schedule:

Holy Thursday April 9th 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday April 10th 3:00 p.m.

Holy Saturday April 11th 7:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday April 12th 9:30 a.m.

Daily Mass is available on our website if you have internet connection. There are also options on the television.

<https://sacedheartchurchely.org>

The Cathedral of the Madeleine- YouTube: cotmtv

Television station: EWTN