

A Message
from
Archbishop Philip Tartaglia
to the Clergy, Religious and Lay Faithful of the Archdiocese of Glasgow

My dear Brothers and Sisters,

In an effort to help halt the spread of the coronavirus, on top of the suspension of public Mass and other acts of worship, following Government advice, we now need to close our churches. I had hoped that this would not become necessary, but it has.

The new golden rule in this battle against the virus is that we should all stay at home, if possible, and that, outside the home, no group larger than two persons should form.

We are all a bit anxious just now. I know I am. The coronavirus will have mild effects in the vast majority of people, but, according to the experts, we can expect confirmed cases of the virus to rise and fatalities to grow in number. At the same time, our leaders and medical officers have advised us that staying at home will halt the spread of the virus, lessen suffering and save lives.

I do not want to do anything that encourages people to come out of their homes, or that causes people to gather in a group of more than two, or that might contribute in some way to the spread of the virus through some hidden contagion. Churches therefore have to close - even for private visits.

The full package of restrictions is therefore as follows:

- Suspension of public Masses and Acts of Worship
- Closure of churches
- No marriages in church
- No baptisms in church
- No home visits to the sick
- Funerals limited to the Act of Committal at the graveside or crematorium

Thankfully, government directives still allow for the livestreaming of Masses and other acts of worship from behind closed doors. I encourage you therefore to follow Mass online, and, as you do, to make an Act of Spiritual Communion asking the Lord to come into your heart through the grace of the Holy Spirit, even though you cannot receive him sacramentally in Holy Communion.

Mass is celebrated online from the Cathedral every weekday at 8.15am, 1pm and 5.15pm, and on Sundays at 10am and 12 noon. You can follow these Masses at www.cathedralg1.org

It is important to be aware that, if you need any personal pastoral or sacramental care, please call or email your parish priest, and he will discuss with you how best to help you in the circumstances.

I encourage you to pray unceasingly in your homes for a halt to this epidemic, for those who are suffering, for all doctors, nurses and healthcare workers, and for our civic leaders. Here again you can access news updates and online prayer resources at the www.rcag.uk and other Catholic websites.

Let us together put our trust in God the Father who created us with a loving purpose.

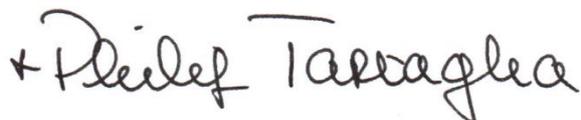
Let us together put our trust in God the Son, Jesus Christ, who, through his death and resurrection, conquered sin and death, so that death will never have the last word in human destiny.

Let us together put our trust in God the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us and gives us the strength to do what is right in every circumstance.

Let us together continue to seek the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Michael & All the Holy Angels, St Andrew, St Ninian, St Mungo, St Columba, St Margaret, St John Ogilvie and All the Saints, that the human race will come through this time safely.

My dear friends, stay at home, keep safe, and may God bless us all.

Yours devotedly in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Philip Tartaglia". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

✠Philip Tartaglia
Archbishop of Glasgow
Glasgow, 24th March 2020