



March 22, 2020

Sacred Heart Parish—Clay County & St. Joseph Parish—O'Brien County

FROM THE PASTOR

Greetings!

As we all know, this Virus Crisis is making life more difficult for all of us. People are concerned about their health, their children, their jobs, their finances, and all of the aspects of their lives that are now suddenly changed. Everyone is having to deal with some difficulty. Even our Faith may be tested.

As a church, it is sad that we will not be able to enjoy our Lenten devotions, Holy Week, and Easter. First Communion will not be on the scheduled date. Faith Life events that we were joyfully anticipating are suddenly taken away for now.

Please know that my prayers are with you in this trial. Prayer and our relationship with Jesus can help us through this unprecedented problem. We are giving you as many spiritual resources as possible for your nourishment, aid, and comfort.

I plan to record a Mass for each weekend that you can access on your television, computer, or phone. The Sacred Heart website will continue to give you fresh information and resources. Although there will be no bulletin, I will provide a weekly message for you. If anyone needs the Anointing of the Sick, please contact me. You may also contact me with any questions or concerns.

We will continue to provide information for you as the situation continues to develop. Hopefully we can be there for each other in prayer and support even when we are unable to be physically present in worship.

God Bless Us All!

Fr. Tim Hogan

ANNOUNCEMENTS

VIDEOTAPED MASS: Fr. Tim will be videotaped celebrating Mass each week. You can access it on our website beginning at 4:00p.m. on Saturday (use the link below). It will also be broadcast on SMU Channel 3 weekly at 8:30p.m. on Wednesday and at 8:00a.m. on Thursday. Please check this web page for updates and additional resources as well: https://spencersacredheart.com/coronavirus_resource_page

THE SPENCER CDA GARAGE SALE for April 3rd and 4th has been postponed to a later date.

CHURCH SUPPORT: Sacred Heart - \$8,087.20, St. Joseph - \$2,966.00.

A PRAYER FOR PROTECTION IN TIME OF PANDEMIC

O Mary, you always brighten our path as a sign of salvation and of hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who, at the Cross, took part in Jesus' pain while remaining steadfast in faith. O loving Mother, you know what we need, and we are confident you will provide for us as at Cana in Galilee. Intercede for us with your Son Jesus, the Divine Physician, for those who have fallen ill, for those who are vulnerable, and for those who have died. Intercede also for those charged with protecting the health and safety of others and for those who are tending to the sick and seeking a cure. Help us, O Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do as we are told by Jesus, who took upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows, so as to lead us, through the Cross, to the glory of the Resurrection. Amen. Under thy protection we seek refuge, O Holy Mother of God. In our needs, despise not our petitions, but deliver us always from all dangers, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen. Adapted from the prayer of Pope Francis

COVID-19 DIOCESAN GUIDELINES

UPDATED DIOCESAN GUIDELINES AS RESPONSE TO COVID-19 AS OF 3/16/20

Following the recommendations released by the Centers of Disease Control to "cancel large events or gatherings that could contribute to the spread of COVID-19," Bishop Walker Nickless issued the mandate to suspend all Sunday and public Masses effective immediately.

This suspension will extend for eight weeks, and then will be re-evaluated as the coronavirus situation develops. The CDC recommends no gathering of groups of 50 or larger during this crisis. Parishes within the diocese will resume normal activities when it is safe to do so.

This has been the most difficult decision I have made during my time as bishop," Bishop Nickless explained after making the decision to cancel all Masses, which will include Holy Week, the high point of the Catholic Church's liturgical year. "The health and well-being of all people in the diocese, as well as all Catholics, is of the utmost importance at this time. I ask all the faithful for their understanding and to join me in prayer for the end to this public health crisis.

During this period, Catholics in the Diocese of Sioux City are dispensed from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass, according to the bishop's mandate.

Liturgical and parish guidelines for this 8-week period will include:

Celebration of public Masses - All public celebrations of the Mass will be suspended. Pastors are encouraged to broadcast private Masses via electronic means for their parishioners.

Holy Week – Holy Week liturgies are suspended

Baptisms – Baptisms will only be celebrated with immediate family and godparents. There will be no large group baptisms.

Weddings – Only immediate family members and witnesses are to attend weddings. Clergy are not to attend related social functions. Parishes are not to host receptions.

Funerals – Funerals may be celebrated only with immediate family members. Parishes may not host funeral dinners. The funeral vigil, wake or other events should all be held the same day as the funeral.

Holy Week – Holy Week liturgies are suspended.

Confessions - The sacrament of reconciliation (confession) will be conducted by appointment only.

Sacrament of Confirmation - All spring celebrations of the sacrament of confirmation are suspended.

First Communion - The celebrations of First Communion are suspended.

Quinceañeras - Quinceañeras are suspended.

Eucharistic Adoration - The formal exposition of the Eucharist or adoration will be suspended.

Additional Directives:

Church buildings may remain open for private prayer at the discretion of pastors.

All conferences, retreats, festivals or similar events in the diocese and the parishes are to be suspended.

All religious education, faith formation classes, RCIA and related activities are suspended.

Parish staff are to conduct meetings if essential, and if possible, electronically.

Parish staff members are asked to telecommute, if possible.

Parish governing boards are strongly urged to meet electronically.