



Basilica of Saint Lawrence

Deacon and Martyr

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Saturday, March 14, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Thank you for understanding that given current concerns about the COVID-19 Coronavirus, and out of an abundance of caution and charity for the sick, other parishioners, visitors, health care professionals and first responders, we are POSTPONING ALL events, meetings, tours and Faith Formation classes at the Basilica of Saint Lawrence until further notice. For the time being we will have our regularly scheduled Sunday and Daily Masses, but the Church will be emptied and locked after each Mass. Rather than attend the Masses, however, we ask you to make spiritual communions and watch Masses each day on EWTN's cable channel or at their website:

<https://www.ewtn.com/tv>.

Bishop Jugis has dispensed all people in the diocese of Charlotte from their Sunday obligation of attending Mass; there is no obligation to assist at weekday Mass. My preference is that you please stay home from all Masses until further notice and follow the suggested protocols from the Health Officials. Missing Sunday Mass for health concerns is not a sin. It is better to err on the side of caution and safety for yourself and others.

We are in the process of seeing if we can offer live or recorded video of the private Masses the priests will offer during the week and of the Monstrance in the Adoration Chapel. We hope by this we can offer you a way of seeing Mass at our Parish Church and to let you have prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. Your prayers and Scripture study will be of great benefit in these days of Lent as we walk to Easter. Take great comfort in your faith and in our prayers for you.

Let us pray for those who are sick with any illness, for protection from illness, and for peace in these times of uncertainty. Let us increase our Faith, Hope and Charity trusting in the Lord's blessings. Let us use the knowledge He gives to our Medical professionals and follow their advice.

While some will view this decision as alarmist, the time to take action is not after the virus has begun to be transmitted, but before. We do indeed hope that time will show this decision to have been overly-cautious, and that Western North Carolina will not suffer from exposure to the virus.

May Our Lady of Lourdes, Health of the Sick, keep us in her tender care.

Peace in Christ,

Fr. Arnsparger and Fr. McCanless

National Historic Site, Built 1905-1909
97 Haywood Street