



## DIOCESE OF VICTORIA

*Office of the Bishop*

March 13, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

*"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:4-7)*

St. Paul wrote his letter to the Philippians as he suffered in prison. The Church of the Philippians, his beloved, were divided by a bitter dispute, yet St. Paul wrote the above words that inspire us 2,000 years later.

In a time of fear and concern for the unknown, let us turn to the power of the Risen Lord for our strength. As I issue the plan of action for the continued celebration of the Sunday Mass, I encourage each of us to remember that: *"In this divine Sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the Cross, is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner."* (CCC No. 1367, Referring to the Council of Trent 1562)

Our fears have been taken on the Cross, and Jesus loves us with a complete self-sacrificial love. Let us keep one another deeply in prayer, especially those most affected with anxiety and concern.

*+ Brendan Cahill*

Most Rev. Brendan J. Cahill  
Bishop of the Diocese of Victoria

## Diocese of Victoria in Texas

### COVID-19 -- Addendum 2

#### **ADDITIONAL DIRECTIVES:**

As we continue to monitor the situation, and follow best practices regarding the prevention of the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), we recognize this is a fluid situation subject to the need for updated information and action. Effective immediately, the Diocese of Victoria in Texas adds the following measures to its previously promulgated directives:

#### **LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS:**

At this time, when we need God and the support of one another more than ever, **the Diocese of Victoria will maintain the regularly scheduled Masses throughout the diocese for all who choose to participate.**

Those uncomfortable about attending Mass due to the coronavirus are excused from the obligation to attend. In addition, Catholics who are in a high-risk category because of age, a chronic health condition, or a compromised immune system, are asked to remain at home. They are not obligated to attend Mass.

Those unable to attend Mass can pray the Mass by means of radio, television or livestreaming, where possible. The Mass is televised live from the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory in Victoria on Sunday at 9 a.m. on KAVU television and livestreamed at [www.olvcathedral.org](http://www.olvcathedral.org). In addition, the 8 a.m. Sunday Mass from Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Hallettsville is broadcast on Texas Thunder Radio (99.9 FM) or by downloading the TUNEIN app for free to hear the Mass. In addition, there are national broadcasts of the Sunday Mass on various cable networks.

Those who cannot attend Mass are also encouraged to pray in their homes. Spiritual Communion can be made at any time. Through spiritual communion, we unite ourselves to God and the Church in prayer, when unable to physically receive the Holy Eucharist. Praying a rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet or reading Scripture is also recommended.

In addition to the previously promulgated regulations, pastors are to ensure that the Offertory Gifts of bread and wine are sufficiently covered and protected, if they are carried in procession to the altar during the celebration of Mass.

#### **OTHER GATHERINGS AND EVENTS**

**Effective immediately and until March 31, 2020**, all diocesan and parish events scheduled to occur off campus, particularly overnight activities such as retreats, trips, etc., are to be either cancelled or rescheduled.

Daily events, meetings, Lenten fish fry events, after Mass coffee and donuts, and other such parish activities held on the premises of the parish may continue, depending on the prudential

judgment of the pastor or parochial administrator. Previously scheduled one-day diocesan events will continue (such as the Pastoral Institute, the Men's Conference, etc.).

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION:**

At this time, the diocese is not canceling any religious education or sacramental preparation classes. This is subject to change, if warranted.

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS:**

The diocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools is in constant contact with the officials at the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops, local health and public school officials and the principals of our Catholic schools, to ensure that the best decisions are being made for our school communities.

**LET US PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER:**

Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph, may the Lord, who sustains us in our human weakness and trials, shower his protection upon us. Let us join in praying for one another, as brothers and sisters in Christ. In a special way, let us pray for those affected by illness, including the coronavirus, and those who care for them.

*(3/13/20)*