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Public Masses Suspended in Ohio through Easter

The Catholic Conference of Ohio, chaired by Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, has released a statement temporarily suspending all publicly celebrated Masses and liturgies through Easter.

The archdiocesan website, www.catholiccincinnati.org, will be live-streaming daily and weekend Masses from the Cathedral of St. Peter in Chains. Daily Mass will be available on-line at 8 a.m. Monday through Saturday and Sunday Mass will be live-streamed at 11 a.m. All live-streaming Masses will also be available on the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/CatholicCincinnati/>.

The full release from the Catholic Conference of Ohio:

“For Immediate Release

For Information: Carolyn Jurkowitz, Executive Director
614-224-7147

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

After serious consideration of the grave health risk involved in public gatherings and in order to curb the spread of the Coronavirus, the bishops of Ohio have decided, **effective immediately**, to suspend temporarily all publicly celebrated Masses/liturgies, at least through the celebrations of Holy Week and Easter. The bishops of Ohio dispense the Catholic faithful who reside in their respective dioceses and all other Catholics currently in Ohio from the obligation of attending Sunday Mass through Easter Sunday.

This decision is not taken lightly and, as your bishops, causes us great sadness. However, after consultation with the governor and health officials we are convinced that this is the most prudent and necessary action.

Science has proven that participation in public gatherings significantly increases the risk of contagion. This

poses a serious danger to those especially most vulnerable.

As Catholics, in every Sunday Mass we celebrate the passion, death and resurrection of our Lord. The Holy Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith. In this moment, we are experiencing in a unique way the passion of our Lord as this pandemic prevents us from gathering for the Sunday Eucharist. In this very difficult time, we encourage the faithful to turn to the Church's treasury of prayer. Sunday remains a holy day, and we encourage the faithful to pray using the rich resources of our faith, including praying as a family or individually the rosary, divine mercy chaplet, the Liturgy of the Hours, stations of the cross, etc. We also urge you to participate in prayer by way of radio broadcast or televised or live-streamed Mass and make a spiritual communion.

Please join us in praying for all who are suffering from illness or disease of any kind, for all health care workers, and for an easing of the anxiety and tension caused by this situation. Relying on the Motherly care of Our Lady, we unite our sufferings to those of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is our healing and our hope.”

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati is the 44th largest Catholic diocese in the country, with more than 450,000 Catholics, and has the sixth largest Catholic school system in terms of enrollment with more than 40,000 students. The 19-county territory includes 211 parishes and 111 Catholic primary and secondary schools.