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Dear St. Rita Community:

I wanted to update you all on the measures we've taken today at St. Rita in response to one of our members showing symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

First things first, I want to report the family involved is in good spirits and doing well. They are very grateful for our St. Rita Community, and I have assured them of our prayers and support. I want to remind each of you to remember and live out consistently the love of God and neighbor, which means in this instance holding this family in prayer and each other in prayer. In these past twenty-four hours—by its love—St. Rita Catholic Community has again shown its strength and beauty. Continue that!

Also, I wanted to assure you that the person being tested for COVID-19 was NOT at Mass the weekend of March 7-8. This person did attend the 7:30am Mass on March 1. Once feeling sick much later in the week, this person self-isolated. I am grateful this family acted responsibly, practicing common sense and courtesy.

Today we've begun our deep cleaning of the entire campus. We are beginning with the church: narthex, bathrooms, changing room, chapel, confessionals, pews, sanctuary, choir rooms, sacristies—every space in the church. We've also drained the baptismal font. We've engaged our normal cleaning service, Josh Hoffman Janitorial Services, to clean the campus. They are equipped to clean our campus meeting CDC guidelines. Our own facilities staff, however, will be following them to assure the job is done satisfactorily. Also, when moving to the School, our IT staff will clean each electronic device themselves.

Currently, we plan to reopen the church for Mass this weekend for the Vigil Mass at 5:30pm on March 14. Our Sunday Mass schedule will be as normal. We will, however, reassess this decision each day. Please monitor our webpage and social media platforms for the latest information. This weekend our only gatherings will be to celebrate the Mass. All other events, outside of Mass, this weekend are cancelled until further notice.

Going forward, we will keep in communication with you regarding further steps. Again, remember all of this is being done voluntarily out of an abundance of caution. As members of this community and as citizens, it's essential we all act responsibly and rationally. Thus, keep calm, wash your hands, and continue to love one another!

Yours, in Christ,  
Fr. Joshua J. Whitfield