



12521 Inwood Road
Dallas, TX 75244
stritaparish.net

13 March 2020

Dear St. Rita Community:

I again wanted to update you on things at St. Rita.

Our St. Rita family continues in care, and we continue to pray for them. Also, cleaning the campus continues; we have finished with the church and are now moving to other buildings on campus. Larger developments, however, involve decisions touching the entire Diocese:

Across the Diocese of Dallas all Masses and all public liturgies are cancelled throughout the Diocese until March 30, including Sunday Masses. This was a very difficult decision, not taken lightly. However, let me say that as a member of the Presbyteral Council, I completely agree with this decision and am grateful for it. It is imperative we act responsibly for the health of our members as well as the common good. This decision was necessary.

Our Catholic Schools have decided to close until at least March 27. At St. Rita Catholic School, we are prepared to transition to an e-learning environment. More detailed information regarding that transition is forthcoming for the School.

The Bishop is currently working on media outreach this weekend; likewise, so are we. Please keep an eye on our Parish media platforms for the latest regarding what we are at the moment calling “media ministry.” We will do our best on short notice.

Whatever we offer, however, I echo Bishop Burns in saying that this is a wonderful time to live out what the Catholic Church calls the “domestic church.” The domestic church is your family or the intimate community you call your family. Spend time in prayer with them, and praise God with them. Make your spiritual communion, read Scripture together, sing. Continue to keep Sunday holy; consecrate the day to the Lord. Again, keep an eye on our media platforms for resources and engagement.

Regarding pastoral and urgent sacramental needs: If you need a priest in an emergency, you can still call our main line (972-934-8388) to reach a priest. We have currently suspended all sick and homebound visits that are normally made by lay ministers. We have been, however, reaching out to these persons in our care and are keeping in contact with them. A priest remains available for sacramental ministry—just call!

Also, regarding Confessions: Fr. Michal and I will be available in the Church tomorrow morning (March 14) at 9:00am for Confessions as usual. We will not be hearing Confessions in the Confessional rooms, however, but in another location on campus. When you arrive, follow signage indicating where to go. Also, please let me emphasize this point: **If you are in any way feeling ill, do not come to Confessions!** Rather, call us so that we can make special arrangements. It is critical we each act responsibly, even here!



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And last, let me be candid: Closing the doors on Sunday will result in a significant financial hit to our Parish and also to many churches and faith communities. Please remember this. **Please remember to support the Parish financially.** If you would like to explore online giving, [click here](#). But let's not just think of ourselves. **I want also to encourage you to make a second donation to another parish or even another faith community, especially those faith communities with fewer resources than ours.** I have already heard from several priests and ministers who are very nervous for the livelihoods of those who work in churches and faith communities. I know this is an unusual ask, but how beautiful would it be if we could help other communities of faith and not just ours in this very difficult time? Let's be St. Rita to other communities too! Please pray and consider that.

Thank you for being so amazing and calm and smart these past few days! I have been blown away by your charity in action, your hope and good humor. I want you also to know that we have the greatest Parish and School Staff in the universe! I am deeply grateful to them and proud too. And you should be too. Because we're being St. Rita. Which is a beautiful thing to see!

Yours, in Christ,
Fr. Joshua J. Whitfield
Pastoral Administrator
St. Rita Catholic Community