

# ***St. Mary's Church, Praha***

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Dear friends,

We received a communique from Bishop Cahill with the following directives to the priests of the diocese.

- Priests of the diocese are to begin celebrating Masses without a congregation.
- In an effort to discourage public gatherings the bishop has decreed that all Catholics of the Diocese of Victoria are dispensed from the obligation to participate in the Sunday Mass and other Holy Days of obligation until March 31<sup>st</sup>.
- All scheduled events in parishes of the diocese are cancelled. These include:
  - Our Parish Penance Service on March 30 in Moulton and April 1 in Praha.
  - The Lenten Stations of the Cross Service.
  - All parish affiliated group meetings.
- These directives will be reviewed on April 1<sup>st</sup>, to determine whether Holy Week Services will be open to all.

It is rather unfortunate that it has come to this to protect ourselves and others from possible infection. How quickly things change. I however see a silver lining in this. There is a change of tone in our country and everybody seems to be working together to overcome the virus. Hopefully, everybody will see the high premium we put on human life.

What do we do as a parish in the face of all this? Remember we are still in Lent. Do not forget to be Charitable, to Fast, and to Pray in these difficult times. Many thoughts have been floating around in my mind as to how best I can minister to you under these circumstances. I am making arrangements to visit the homebound and the Nursing Home. Parishioners who have any pastoral need should feel free to call me. Our parish office doors are open.

The church is also open to parishioners to make visits to the Blessed Sacrament and for private Stations of the Cross. I will be available for confessions upon request at anytime.

To continue to assist you in your Lenten sacrifice of abstaining from meat on Fridays of Lent we will continue to have the Fish Fry in Moulton. You are encouraged to go through the drive-through line. The few who want to dine-in are welcome to do so. The Social Center is big enough for people to sit ten feet away from one another.

Questions are being asked about the Easter Picnic in Moulton. For now, all arrangements are on hold until the ban on large public gatherings is lifted. Hopefully, by then all will be well to have the Picnic.

I know you will not leave the Church holding the bag but that you will find ways to support the Church financially as you have always done. I appreciate every effort you make to keep the Church going. Thank you. The donation box at the entrance of the church and the mail may be your best options for now.

Lastly, I recommit myself to ministering to you in any way I can day or night. I am only a phone call away. You make stop by to visit anytime.

At this time, I call upon the best in all of us to reach out to those in need and pray for one another.

You are in my prayers.