

MEMO



Date: March 25, 2020
To: All the Faithful of eastern Washington
From: Most Rev. Thomas A. Daly
Re: COVID – 19 Update

As promised, I am writing to provide an update on our diocesan response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The speed at which this infection is spreading only seems to increase. I am very concerned about our health care workers and the potential of overwhelming our hospitals in eastern Washington. I want our parishes and institutions to play a role in preventing the spread of this virus. Therefore, I am announcing the following requirements which will remain in place until Monday, April 13th.

1. All public Masses remain suspended. Priests are to offer private Mass on a daily basis and, to the extent possible, live stream the Mass on the web.
2. All remain dispensed from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass.
3. The Chrism Mass previously schedule for March 31st is postponed.
4. Per instruction by the State of Washington, public funeral Masses, memorials, and graveside services are prohibited.
5. The Sacrament of Penance should be celebrated exclusively for those near death. Penitents not in danger of death should be encouraged to make a perfect act of contrition.
6. The Sacrament of the Sick should be limited to those in danger of death. Priests should use proper precautions including the use of a cotton swab to administer the sacrament.
7. Parishes should suspend all office hours, meetings, adoration, stations, and every other parish activity.
8. The public celebrations of Holy Week liturgies are suspended. I will celebrate these liturgies at the Cathedral and they will be live-streamed.
9. The Sacraments of Initiation are postponed except in the danger of death.
10. Palms should be blessed and reserved for later distribution.
11. Parishioners are encouraged to regularly connect with their parish websites as well as the diocesan site. At-home prayers and devotions are encouraged.
12. The faithful continue to be encouraged to join me in fasting on Fridays until this pandemic is over.
13. Parishioners are encouraged to maintain their financial support of their parish to the extent possible.

I understand some of these requirements are drastic and disappointing. However, my hope is that they will help to facilitate a speedy end to the spread of COVID-19. I once again entrust the faithful of eastern Washington to the Blessed Mother under the title of Our Lady of Lourdes. Just as God has granted countless healings through her intercession in the past, may we receive that same healing today.

Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for us. Live Jesus in our hearts, forever.