

Saint Alphonsus Liguori Parish

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A ministry of the Capuchin Franciscans, Province of St. Mary, New York and New England

March 19, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

All parish activities and public Masses are cancelled for the foreseeable future. Rest assured of my prayers for all of you this day and in the days ahead. The effects of the coronavirus have forced us to change our regular routines, in particular, our ability to assemble as a community to share in fellowship and the sacraments.

Our inability to come to gather as a community forces us to do things differently. For the time being, private prayer will play a major role in our relationship with God and one another. To this end, Bishop Coyne has asked that churches be opened for the faithful to visit. Saint Alphonsus Church will be open on Mondays & Tuesdays from 9:30am - 4:00pm and on Sundays from 9:15am -1:00pm. Please park in the spaces in front of the church. Our Lady of Good Help Church will be open on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00am-3:00pm and on Sundays from 9:15am -1:00pm. Please use the front entrances of the church when visiting.

While we cannot partake in the Eucharist through participation at Mass, we can be in the presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist by sitting before the tabernacle in church. Please consider making a private visit to the church to pray before the Blessed Sacrament.

I would also ask that during this time we continue to adhere to the third commandment of keeping the Sabbath holy. Traditionally, attending Mass was one of the ways we met that responsibility. For the time being we need to seek out other ways. Spending substantial time in prayer, watching a televised Mass, reading the Sunday scriptures and reflecting on them are just a few ways that we can make Sunday what it truly is "The Lord's Day."

Prayer to the Blessed Mother for intercession is also appropriate. A daily rosary for a quick recovery to normalcy could assist us and others in finding solace during these troubled times.

During this season of Lent and at this time of crisis, praying the Stations of the Cross in church or at home is most befitting. There are many, the world over, who are carrying a cross of suffering.

For those who are reluctant to enter a public building at this time the Lenten Cross in front of Saint Alphonsus Church and the shrine of Our Lady in front of Saint Mary's could be a place of pilgrimage and prayer. Leaving a flower or candle at the shrine as a symbol of your prayers and concern for one another may be comforting to those who are anxious.

There are several tools available to us through technology. The parish and diocesan websites can be a means to gain information and inspiration. In addition, Magnificat is offering free online service for daily Mass readings and meditations. If possible, avail yourself of these sites and others of your choosing for spiritual guidance.

The parish office will remain open during regular scheduled hours. Feel free to contact us by phone or in person. In cases of urgency please call me on my cell phone (802) 342-3046.

While we may not be in one another's presence we can surely keep one another in mind. I would encourage you to communicate with one another by telephone or internet. It is important that we do our best to reach out to those who may be feeling isolated as a result of social distancing.

May our God who is healer of every ill be with you.

Sincerely yours,

Fr. Maurice Moreau, O.F.M. Cap.