

Dear Parishioners,

I hope that everyone is staying healthy and is doing their part to not spread the coronavirus. As you know we have cancelled just about all parish activities. The Bishops of Ohio have told all Catholics in Ohio that they are dispensed from the obligation to attend Mass until after Easter, at the earliest, and no public Masses may be celebrated at the parish until further notified. This is a Lent we will always remember! Things have been so very quiet here and I miss the opportunity to see all of you and to be your pastor.

A few days ago we set up the system to livestream Mass at the parish. Mass is celebrated at 8:00 am on Monday through Friday, 4:00 pm on Saturday and 10:00 am on Sunday. You need to have a FACEBOOK account to access the Mass and other information about what is or is not going on at the parish. The FACEBOOK page you go to is **Saint John Vianney Pastor's Page**. We also are working on an alternative plan which soon will be available for those who do not have a FACEBOOK account. This technology will allow us to stay connected and I am hoping that many of you will take advantage of it. Please also remember that, even though you are not here for Mass each week, we do need your continuing financial support to maintain the day to day operation of the parish. Let us continue to pray to the Divine Physician to guard and protect us from coronavirus COVID-19 and all serious illnesses.

Some of the other recommendations made by the Diocese of Cleveland are the following:

First, baptisms at the parish are still possible based on "pastoral urgency." However, in order to limit the potential spread of the virus to a vulnerable population, the priest may only celebrate small, private family baptisms.

Second, during this health crisis we need to exercise every caution to contain the contagion. Therefore, confessions are limited to only when it is absolutely necessary. If you have a question as to what that means, feel free to call one of the parish priests. Also, we are not able to provide confession via technology. I know that this restriction will be a tough one for some of you who appreciate regular confession of sin. For the time being, take advantage of the opportunity to seek God's forgiveness through a good examination of conscience and recitation of the Act of Contrition.

Third, regarding weddings, every effort should be made to reschedule weddings during this crisis if possible. If a civil license is available, a wedding can be celebrated with immediate family members only, keeping in mind the maximum number persons in attendance according to government directives.

Fourth, with regard to funerals, if at all possible it is recommended that you schedule a memorial Mass at a time when the current restrictions are lifted. The Rite of Committal may be celebrated at the cemetery with immediate members only, keeping in mind the call for social distancing. If a funeral Mass is to be celebrated, the attendees are limited to immediate family members only and the published obituary should make note that the funeral Mass and burial are private family only events.

Finally, those who bring communion to the sick and homebound are to use extreme caution and only do so when absolutely necessary or based on pastoral urgency. If the cleric is a high-risk priest or deacon, he is instructed to refrain from taking communion to the sick. All other clergy should use extreme caution to protect themselves from the contagion. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are not permitted to take Holy Communion to the sick during this health crisis for their good and the good of their families. I'll have more information to share next week. Remember, Catholics have always joined together in prayer during times of crisis throughout the ages. May we pray daily and demonstrate love of God & neighbor.

Fr Johns