



ST. JOSEPH † Catholic Church

17 March AD 2020 *St. Patrick*

Updated 19 March AD 2020 *St. Joseph*

Dear Friends,

As of today, in response to new directives from Bishop Rhoades, and for an indefinite amount of time, all public and scheduled activity is suspended at the parish - Masses, Confessions, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, etc. The church will, however, remain open for private prayer; and for those who come I sincerely hope the time spent in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament reserved in the tabernacle is a source of genuine consolation and peace. I will also include some specific information about how we will continue pastoral care lower down in this letter.

I invite all of us to receive this time from God-Whose Providence orders everything-as an opportunity for *intense spiritual growth*. The Lord Jesus will be incredibly generous in providing many graces to those who strive to draw close to Him during these days; to those who move their hearts continually to a desire for Holy Communion (and thus make a 'spiritual communion' often); to those who find time for additional quiet, rest, and genuine recreation; to those who exercise charity toward their family and friends, and especially toward the elderly, and ideally through non-physical forms of communication; to those families who pray the Rosary together every day; and so on. The Lord's Day remains holy and I encourage families to watch any number of televised or streamed Masses online, and to do so in addition to creating space for more time with family prayer and recreation together.

Your prayers can always be seen in relation to being offered in union with the sacrifice of the Mass offered throughout the whole world, regardless of where or when you pray. It will be a real sacrifice to not be able to receive Holy Communion as frequently as we are accustomed. Please offer that to the Lord; and please move your heart to a desire for Holy Communion, and have confidence that the Lord will bestow many graces upon you in so doing. I will remember you all and stay spiritually united with you.

Specific Information

Masses. Bishop Rhoades has instructed that the church is to be locked if Mass is being celebrated. Therefore, no Masses will be celebrated in the church so that the church can remain unlocked for private prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, *with one exception:*

we will livestream a Mass on the parish Facebook page at 6am each Sunday, after which the church will be unlocked for the day. www.facebook.com/saintjoemish

Confessions. If you would like to go to Confession, you simply need to make a request by calling the office (255.6134) or emailing parish@stjoemish.com. We will inform those who make a request when the Sacrament will be available. Confessions will be heard in the sacristy, with the door open (and a sound conditioner outside), and the option to go anonymously will of course be available (and this is required by universal church law, and I will only be told how many folks were informed of when confession is, and not names).

Baptism. If you have an infant in need of baptism, please call the parish office and we will make those arrangements with you directly.

Sick Calls/Last Rites. If anyone is in danger of death or any danger, I will come to you to offer the Sacraments. You can call anytime, day or night - 255.6134.

Sacrificial Giving. Our savings can keep things afloat for awhile and I am not particularly concerned about this, but we would also be incredibly grateful to anyone who is able to mail their normal giving or drop it off in the office or rectory mailboxes (rectory if cash since you can get the envelope inside the building). Larger gifts given less frequently are obviously not a problem (my routine is monthly and online). This is also an opportunity when you might consider a transition to online giving.

www.osvonlinegiving.com/1253 For those who may be curious, both the parish and Mishawaka Catholic School are committed to paying all staff at every level during this time; of course we are also going to try to find creative ways to utilize folks' time and talent given the drastic change in what is needed. I anticipate we may be able to do some painting and other odd jobs perhaps!

Office. The office will remain open (unless we are told otherwise). M-Th 9am-4:00pm and F 9am-Noon. You can always reach us by phone (255.6134) and email (parish@stjoemish.com), too!

St. Joseph, pray for us! Holy Guardian Angels, pray for us!



Father Chris