

Statement for Website  
18 March, 2020

As Pastor of Holy Rosary Parish, I want to communicate periodically with parishioners about various issues related to the Covid 19 pandemic.

First, some important information:

The Bishop has asked us to cancel all weekday and weekend Masses until further notice. The Bishop has released all Catholics from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass until April 18. Fr. Kessete and myself will be celebrating Mass each day at which the intentions scheduled for that day will be offered. The Bishop will be celebrating the 11:30 AM Mass at the Cathedral every Sunday which will be live-streamed on the internet through the Diocesan website.

All Holy Week celebrations are cancelled. The Bishop will celebrate them at the Cathedral and they will be live-streamed on the Diocesan website.

All Baptisms are cancelled until further notice and will be re-scheduled once the crisis is passed.

Weddings will be permitted although attendance will be limited to immediate family (maximum 50 people) and proper social distancing (people in Church at least two metres (six feet) apart from each other).

Funerals will be permitted although attendance will be limited to immediate family (maximum 50 people) and proper social distancing (people in Church at least two metres (six feet) apart from each other).

Until further notice, the Church will be opened for private prayer from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM. We ask people to maintain proper social distancing (two metres/six feet) between individuals. Eucharistic Adoration will not take place during this time.

Confessions will take place in the Church from 3:30 to 4:00 PM on Saturday afternoons, although proper social distancing will be observed (two metres/six feet between penitent and confessor).

The Parish Office will remain open. I will try to be in the Office as much as possible but Office staff may not always be present. We will do our best to meet the needs of parishioners.

All other parish activities including: Learning and Prayer Sessions for Confirmation and First Communion Candidates; RCIA Sessions; Knights of Columbus, Catholic Women's League and Holy Name Society Meetings; Seniors Bingo etc. are cancelled.

The process of determining the future of the Parish Hall is suspended until further notice.

As the situation unfolds, the Bishop will be putting statements about various issues on the Diocesan website. The information on this website takes precedence over whatever you read on the Parish one. It is important that people have clear accurate information about various issues and I will do my best to update the Parish website as circumstances change as soon as possible but doing so might take time. I apologize for any confusion caused by this situation.

Next, something I ask you to remember. At times like these, fear, anxiety and suspicion can become powerful forces affecting human behaviour. The situation facing us will get worse before it gets better. The number of cases of Covid 19 will increase significantly as will be number of deaths resulting from them. As Catholics and Christians, we say we believe in God. Yet, if that is true, we must trust He will guide and protect us. We have a simple choice. Do we turn inward, think only about ourselves and loved ones and cut ourselves off from God and our neighbours, or do we face outward and (while taking all the prudent precautions like washing our hands frequently, sneezing or coughing into our sleeves, maintaining social distancing and avoiding large crowds) remember we are called to serve God by caring for our neighbour. Check up on the elderly person who lives next door. Ask those who can't get out if they need anything at the grocery store when you go shopping. Call the relative you haven't seen in a while just to see how they are doing. It is in the small actions that we show whether we really believe in God or not.

Fr. Michael Basque