

Coronavirus Information from Archbishop Sample. Read further for specifics for St. Andrew.

March 12, 2020

The celebration of the Most Holy Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. It is in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass that we encounter the mystery of our redemption, are nourished by God's Word, and receive the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ.

For these reasons, the Church places a grave obligation for the faithful to participate at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. This fulfills the Lord's command to "keep holy the Sabbath."

Nevertheless, for a just cause the Church's pastors may dispense the faithful from this grave obligation. Given the declared pandemic of the COVID-19 virus, Archbishop Alexander K. Sample therefore issues the following directives. He does so out of an abundance of concern for the health and wellbeing of the people of God entrusted to his pastoral care.

The governor of the state of Oregon, Kate Brown, has canceled all public gatherings of more than 250 people. The fact is that most of the Masses celebrated on the weekends in the Archdiocese of Portland are far below that number. Therefore:

1. Anyone 60 years or older is encouraged to not attend Mass, since they are the most vulnerable to this virus. They would therefore be dispensed from the obligation to attend Mass.
2. Persons who have underlying medical issues that put them at risk, or persons with compromised immune systems, are asked not to attend Mass. They, likewise, would be dispensed from the obligation to attend Mass.
3. Persons who are not feeling well, no matter how mild the symptoms, are urged not to attend Mass. They also would be dispensed from the obligation.
4. A general dispensation is offered to anyone else in the Archdiocese of Portland who sincerely and seriously think they might be at risk. This dispensation may be used by anyone of any age.
5. The faithful who *are* in attendance at Mass are reminded to avoid all physical contact with others and should attempt to keep a safe distance from each other.

These directives and dispensations will remain in effect until April 8, 2020, in keeping with Gov. Brown's directive. The archdiocese will continue to monitor and evaluate the situation, and offer further direction as circumstances change or as further direction is given by public officials.

Some further things to consider:

1. Any parish gatherings other than Mass that would exceed 250 people should be canceled. Please note that the Department of Catholic Schools has issued its own guidelines regarding school gatherings. Please follow their directions.

2. Parishes should break down school Masses so as to keep the numbers below 250.
3. Even with the above directives in place, some parishes may still have difficulty keeping Mass attendance below 250. Pastors are encouraged to be creative in managing this situation. Some possibilities would be to encourage the faithful to attend Masses in their parishes that are known to be less attended. Another possibility would be to add Masses to help spread out the numbers at each Mass.
4. Those who would make use of the dispensations mentioned above may want to consider attending a daily Mass in the parish.
5. Those who would make use of the dispensations mentioned above and not participate in Mass on the weekend may want to consider watching Mass via television or livestreamed on the internet. Some parishes may wish to livestream their own parish Mass and make it available online.
6. Those who make use of the dispensations mentioned above and would not be present at Mass on the weekend are encouraged to make an act of Spiritual Communion. This is a beautiful devotional practice in the Church and is a real source of grace in communion with our Lord. Some people who are in attendance at Mass may for their own reasons feel uncomfortable at this time receiving Holy Communion at Mass due to a fear of contamination. These are also encouraged to make an act of Spiritual Communion. Below is an example of a prayer for spiritual communion.

My Jesus,

I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.

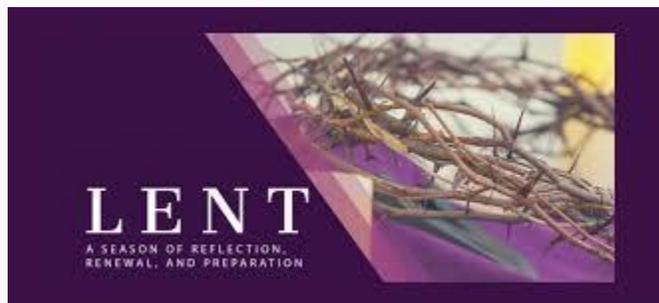
Never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.

During these difficult and trying times, let us keep one another in prayer and pray especially for those who are most vulnerable to this virus. Let us also remember those who have lost their lives to COVID-19 and their grieving families. Placing our trust in Jesus, we will together make it through this time.

Spanish

Whether you are a member of the clergy, parish or school staff, laity or just a concerned citizen, we have put together a page which has much of the information and links you are looking for. [CLICK HERE.](#)



Changes for Mass

The Pastoral Council met last night and unanimously agreed the focus of the parish should first be making Mass for those who choose to attend as comfortable and safe as possible. There will be several changes to the Mass including asking parishioners to stop into the restrooms to wash their hands before Mass. The Community Center doors will be open. During Mass there will be no sign of peace, no wine, no holding hands, the offertory will be collected in the center baskets and not passed, and Eucharistic Ministers will use hand sanitizer before serving wafers rather than the homemade bread. We are also canceling children's liturgy of the word as well as coffee and donuts for the next three weeks.

See below for many resources for prayers, Mass, bible study, readings, and reflections. These links are also available on our website.

Notes regarding the overall campus.

1) Our cleaning staff is disinfecting all active-use surfaces including the backs and armrests of the pews, door handles, drinking fountains, sink faucets, paper towel dispensers, kitchen counters, and appliances.

2) Small groups may choose to meet in our gym and meeting rooms. There will be disinfectant spray, paper towels, and gloves to sanitize tables, chairs, and other surfaces. Please take the time to sanitize before and after your meeting. As usual please schedule and cancel meetings by contacting Lisa Hatten so the calendar is as accurate as possible.

Please observe the following precautions:

1) Before Mass or any meetings, wash your hands for at least 20 seconds.

2) Please remember to avoid touching your face and to cough/sneeze into your elbow.

3) If anyone in your family is experiencing cold or flu-like symptoms, please stay home until symptom-free for at least 24 hours.



Here is a CNS translation of the prayer Pope Francis recited by video March 11 asking Mary to protect Italy and the world during the coronavirus pandemic.

*O Mary,
you always shine on our path
as a sign of salvation and of hope.
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,
who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm.
You, Salvation of the Roman People,
know what we need,
and we are sure you will provide
so that, as in Cana of Galilee,
we may return to joy and to feasting
after this time of trial.
Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform to the will of the Father
and to do as we are told by Jesus,
who has taken upon himself our sufferings*

*and carried our sorrows
to lead us, through the cross,
to the joy of the resurrection. Amen.*

*Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God.
Do not disdain the entreaties of we who are in trial,
but deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.*

Additional Prayers

Coronavirus Prayer

*For you as God commanded his angels
to keep you in all your ways.
They shall bear you upon their hands,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.*

Psalm 91

*Since you, O God, are with us,
nothing that has happened, nothing still to come,
can rob us of our hope in Christ.
Sustain us, we beg you,
during this time of uncertainty.
Bless all the emergency and medical personnel
who are caring for the sick and working to contain the outbreak.
Grant swift recovery to those who are affected
and comfort to their families and loved ones.
Encourage those who are afraid.
Bind us now, more than ever,
to you and to each other,
so that we may triumph
by the power of him who loves us,
our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever.*

ICEL 1998, adapted

Click on the links below for additional resources. These are also on the St Andrew [website!](#)

[Sunday Mass Online Mercy Home for Boys and Girls Archdiocese of Chicago](#)

[Sunday Mass on Line \(Spanish\)](#)

[USCCB Daily and Sunday reading](#)

[New Heart, New spirit Reflection on Sunday Scriptures for Lent \(St James cathedral Seattle\)](#)

[Reflections on the Sunday Readings \(Garaventa Center University of Portland\)](#)

Helpful Links

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:](#)

[Oregon Health Authority:](#)