13 March 2020

My Dear Parish Family,

We are all aware of the current situation regarding the coronavirus and the dangers it is bringing. With this in mind I write you to provide some encouragement and guidance. It is often the first response of any of us in a dangerous situation to resort to panic. I would instead counsel you to trust. As Catholics we trust that no matter the situation, our heavenly Father is always in charge. Even when times seem darkest we turn to him for strength and hope.

With this in mind, I invite you to remember prayer. Please continue to turn to God and seek His strength, peace and protection. At the same time, we must also remember that we are not without faults, and it is ultimately sin that brings illness and such. Therefore, I also invite you to humbly submit to the Sacrament of Holy Penance soon and frequently. Never abandon God as He will never abandon you.

Keeping our spiritual house in order as we must, we also recognize the need to do what it necessary to maintain our earthly house. Therefore, effective Sunday, March 15, all regular parish activities will be cancelled for a period of 30 days. During this time we will all have to work together to continue the work of the parish, making sure that we all show patience, understanding and charity towards each other.

Effective immediately Bishop Jugis has issued the following statement: “The obligation of the faithful to attend Sunday Mass is waived until further notice.” Even though the obligation is waived, all regularly scheduled parish Masses will continue to be offered. I strongly encourage everyone to consider the wisdom in attending these Masses. If you are in one or more of the designated “at risk” populations (elderly, lung disease, cancer patient, etc.), are a caregiver for an “at risk” individual, believe that you may have been exposed to the coronavirus, or experience flu-like symptoms such as fever, aches, coughing, etc., please exercise the option to stay home. At this time the best medical experts tell us to use common sense and simple hygiene practices such as hand washing and avoiding larger gatherings.

During the next thirty days, Mass, Confessions and Adoration will continue as scheduled. We will also offer a period of a 40 Hour devotion where we are encouraged to pray for protection, repentance and reparation. This 40 Hour devotion will commence on Tuesday, March 17 at 8:00 pm and conclude on Thursday, March 19 at 5:00 pm. Please sign up to cover an hour or two during this time of prayer.

Finally, I ask you for one consideration. During this time, when there will be a natural reduction in attendance, I ask that you please remember the work of the Church continues and that work can only continue by virtue of your stewardship. If you will not be able to attend, please either sign up online to provide your portion of stewardship or mail it in regularly. We all depend on each other to be the hands of God during this time. Prayer, common sense and charity will bring us through the next trying days and weeks.

Let us above all pray for each other, our families, friends and those who will become isolated during this time.

God bless and keep you safe,

Fr. Christopher A. Roux
Pastor / Rector
Cathedral of Saint Patrick