



**St. Louis Catholic Church, North Star
St. Nicholas Catholic Church, Osgood**

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Pastor: Rev. David G. Howard, JCL



March 22, 2020

A MESSAGE FROM FR. HOWARD

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

At the time of this writing, I am sure that many of you have read Archbishop Schnurr's letter of 17 March 2020. In that letter, which is attached, he acknowledged the different emotions that all of us, including him, are experiencing during this time of confusion, fear, and uncertainty in the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic. He also reiterated that it was a very painful decision for the Catholic Bishops of Ohio to suspend the celebration of all public Masses at least through Easter Sunday. And, I truly believe that. While I also greatly share in the disappointment and the sadness of so many people regarding the temporary suspension of all public celebrations, I understand and accept that the Archbishop is truly trying to protect his flock, the faithful of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, by acting in a responsible manner and on the basis of the information that we have thus far regarding the Coronavirus threat.

In his letter, the Archbishop also reminded us of the importance of prayer during this time of trial. In fact, the Catholic Bishops of Ohio, in their joint letter of 16 March 2020, invited the faithful to turn to the Church's treasury of prayer during this time, especially through praying the Most Holy Rosary, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, the Liturgy of the Hours, and countless beautiful devotions that are at our disposal. To that end, the archdiocesan website has provided various resources and links that will be helpful, including frequently asked questions and answers for the faithful regarding archdiocesan protocols about worship and sacraments in the time of public health concern; a live stream of the (closed-door) Mass at the Cathedral of St. Peter-in-Chains (Mon-Sat at 8:00 a.m. & Sunday at 11:00 a.m.); and, a prayer for making a Spiritual Communion. But what is a Spiritual Communion? What does it even mean? To put it simply, a Spiritual Communion is a pious and an ardent desire to receive the Most Holy Eucharist at a time when we are unable to actually receive it, and it involves making a prayer of petition that asks for the effects of Sacramental Communion in the soul, such as a loving union with Jesus Christ and with fellow communicants. When reflecting upon the necessity of making a Spiritual Communion during this time, it is important to remember that Almighty God never fails to fulfill a sincere desire to love him, and that God is not restricted to the Sacraments when it comes to bestowing His graces. In his 2003 Encyclical Letter, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (no. 34), Pope St. John Paul II, offered the powerful reminder that the practice of Spiritual Communion "has happily been established in the Church for centuries and recommended by the saints who were masters of the spiritual life." In fact, quoting St. Teresa of Jesus, the Holy Father wrote: "When you do not receive communion and you do not attend Mass, you can make a spiritual communion, which is a most beneficial practice; by it the love of God will be greatly impressed on you."

Archbishop Schnurr has also asked Pastors to make church buildings remain accessible so that the faithful can offer prayer to the Lord and be consoled by His Real Presence in the Most Holy Eucharist throughout the day. And, I certainly would encourage parishioners to spend some time with our Blessed Lord in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. The Archbishop has also requested that priests of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati privately offer the Sacrifice of the Mass "for the good of the people of their parishes, for the whole archdiocese, and for all our brothers and sisters throughout the world who are suffering from this illness, for those who are afraid, and for those who are stricken by anxiety and social tensions." As such, I have continued to offer the Mass privately so that it may be for the benefit "of all and for each." It is also my intention to continue the schedule for individual confessions at both parishes, that is unless priests become impeded by further restrictions or unless I am impeded by illness.

Admittedly, I personally never anticipated the severity of that which we are currently facing. However, over the past several days, I have come to realize and to accept the serious nature of this pandemic. Moreover, I have come to better appreciate the protocols that have been issued by both ecclesiastical and civil authorities regarding the matter. In the meantime, I will especially continue to offer prayers for your health and safety and for the health and safety of your families and loved ones, and, of your charity, I humbly request your prayers for each other and for me as well. Indeed, this is a sad time, but it is also an opportunity for us to deepen our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ through an intensification of prayer and penance. And, as I close this letter, I ask you to join me in praying, through the intercession of St. Louis and St. Nicholas, that this pandemic will soon be over, lives will be spared, and we can finally return to normalcy of gathering together as brothers and sisters in the Lord in our daily interactions, and, most importantly, in the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass!

over



Spiritual Communion

(Since you are unable to receive Holy Communion during this time, you can make this Prayer of Spiritual Communion, a source of grace in the midst of difficulty.)



**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.**

**You can live stream Mass (closed door)
from the Cathedral of St. Peter-in-Chains on the Internet daily by going to
www.stpeterinchainscathedral.org**

scroll down to

Live Streamed Mass Schedule

*(Mass is streamed live Monday-Saturday at 8 a.m.
and Sunday at 11 a.m. or watch anytime.)*

Baptism will be privately held for **Colette Rose Wendel**, daughter of Reggie and Natalie Wendel, at 4:30 p.m. next Saturday, March 28 at St. Nicholas Church. Congratulations to the families!

Confessions: At this time Father Howard will be hearing confessions Thursday evenings at St. Louis Church beginning at 7 p.m. and on Saturday mornings at St. Nicholas Church from 9-9:30 p.m.

Stations of the Cross books are available at each church if you would like to pray the stations on your own time. The churches are open during the day if you would like to stop in for personal prayer.

Church Cleaning (March 31) at both parishes has been postponed.

There are lists available with shut-ins at the entrance of the churches if you would like to send Easter greeting cards to them.

Annual Cleanup of the St. Martin Cemetery will be held April 1. All loose items will be removed. Only things attached to the stone or footer will be allowed. Please label all saddles with the deceased's name.

Are you celebrating a significant wedding anniversary in 2020? 25, 40, 50, 60, 65, 70, or 75 years...Go online to <http://www.catholiccincinnati.org/ministries-offices/family-life/wedding-anniversary/> to request a certificate from the Archbishop by April 12. If you are married 50 years, the date of the Golden Anniversary Mass is August 1 at 4:30 p.m. at either St. Peter in Chains Cathedral, Cincinnati or at Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Dayton.

St. Louis Church Basement Committee for April, May and June: Chair-Sara Seger, Tabitha Berger, Marilyn Dirksen, Teresa Grilliot, Cheryl Hoelscher, Carolyn Rauh, Deborah Hemmelgarn (Dave) and Monica Brookhart.

Prayer Chain: If you have someone to put on our Prayer Chain email or call the office at 419-582-2531 or call Marianne Brunswick at 419-582-3535.

Baptism & Beyond Class will be held Monday, June 22 at 7 p.m. in the St. Nicholas Church basement. All couples are to attend before baptism. Call 419-582-2531 to register.

CCD News

Please call or email the office to register your child who is in kindergarten at the present time for first grade for next year.

St. Denis Knights of Columbus cancelled their speaker, Patrick Madrid, that was planned for March 21. All purchased tickets will be refunded.

Want to stream movies through your Internet service? FORMED has movies for your viewing pleasure that can also help you grow in your Catholic Faith. There are movies for kids and families. To register go to nsoregion.formed.org and sign up.

In your charity, please remember to pray

for our Catechumens *Cortney Norris* and *Eileen Page*, who are preparing for their initiation into the Christian faith by Holy Baptism, Holy Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist, and for our Candidate *Mark Rismiller*, who, already one with us by Holy Baptism, wishes to be received into full communion of the Catholic Church.

Last Week's Contributions

Sunday Collection: St. Louis: \$3,119.25 St. Nicholas: \$2,170.25

Since all public Masses and liturgies have been temporarily suspended, the question has arisen regarding how a person might continue to offer their gift of financial participation and support to our parishes, so that they, like every other household, can continue to meet their expenses. For those members who would like to continue to financially participate in their support, envelopes may be dropped off at, or mailed to:

The Pastoral Center, P.O. Box 9, Osgood, Ohio 45351.

