

*HOLY TRINITY PARISH
CORONA VIRUS UPDATE*

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

Along with our Archdiocesan leadership, our parish continues to monitor the ever-changing situation surrounding the coronavirus outbreak and how it may impact our parish communities. The World Health Organization has officially declared the coronavirus to be a pandemic of undetermined duration. In response to that declaration, **Archbishop Etienne has directed that, effective immediately, there will be no public celebration of Mass throughout the archdiocese of Seattle. This does include celebrations of the weekday Mass and is extended to the celebration of public prayer devotions like the Stations of the Cross, Adoration, Benediction, the Rosary, Penance Services, etc.** This directive is in force until further notice and has been made for the common good of all of our Catholic faithful, to slow the spread of the virus, and to protect those among us who are at high risk and most vulnerable to contract this virus.

I want to reassure you that a person is ***temporarily dispensed*** from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass until the coronavirus danger lessens or abates. The obligation ***will resume*** at such time as the suspension of the celebration of the Eucharist is lifted by our Archbishop and when a person begins to attend other public gatherings or participate in public activities again.

Accordingly, I wish to address some of the questions and concerns that you, our parishioners have expressed.

VIDEO CELEBRATION OF THE MASS

Although the celebration of the Eucharist has been suspended, **we will videotape the Sunday celebration of the Mass on Saturday evening and post it to our website each week until further notice. The video will be available on Sunday morning** for your time of participation, prayer, and reflection as you strive to “keep holy the Lord’s Day” in this challenging time. In addition, please see the links that our archdiocese has shared with us about the many resources available to aid in your time of prayer and reflection.

Our weekday chapel will remain open from 8:00am to 8:00pm, seven days a week for private prayer and to spend time in in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

In those rare times, which we are now experiencing, when we are prevented from receiving Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, our Lord offers us the grace of spiritual communion when we sincerely call on Him in prayer. Making a spiritual communion for ourselves who, for whatever reasons, cannot receive the Eucharist is an ancient spiritual practice and a grace that our Lord gives to us. In this time of uncertainty and spread of the coronavirus let us unite our prayers with all of those throughout the world who are suffering. May each prayer for spiritual communion increase our hunger for the Mass, our desire to receive our Lord and to be united with him. When you are unable to receive communion, pray:

*“My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most holy Eucharist. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot 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++*

PARISH MEETINGS, GATHERINGS, AND DEVOTIONS

Because Public Health Officials are specifically advising “to avoid large gatherings and events” that are *non-essential*, effective immediately **all church meetings, faith formation classes, social activities, to include outside groups that use our facilities, are suspended until April 1st, at which time we will reevaluate continuing the measures that we have implemented. During this time period, our parish offices will remain open to serve the needs of our faith community.**

We are mindful of the necessary sanitation procedures that are required on ongoing and more frequent basis to keep our facilities as germ free as possible, especially in our chapel and parish and faith formation offices.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

On a practical note, although we will not be able to take up our usual Sunday collection to support the ministries and services of our parish and our Capital Campaign efforts, I appeal to you to continue your giving to support the life of our parish family. You may send your contributions in the mail, drop them off in the parish office or mail slot, or you might give consideration to enrolling in our parish EFT or online giving program. Instructions are available on the front page of our parish website or by calling the parish office if you need assistance. **I am grateful to you for your generous giving that will help us to run the parish on a day-to-day basis and to meet our financial obligations in an uninterrupted manner until this crisis is over.**

PASTORAL MINISTRY TO HOMEBOUND AND HOSPITALIZED

Jesus calls us to be as present as possible to people in these circumstances and to continue the healing ministry of Jesus. Our area nursing homes and other care facilities have been closed to volunteers, including our parish Eucharistic Ministers, so they will not be able to visit as usual.

We will strive to ensure the availability of The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick to our parishioners experiencing serious illness, an ongoing weakened condition, a new illness, anticipating serious surgery, or those in danger of death. In doing so, our parish priests, Fr. Jack and Fr. Dennis, will follow all appropriate health care protocols in place in the hospital and in public care facilities. Anointing of individual homebound parishioners can still be requested through our parish office and will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Please keep our priests and their health and safety in your prayers.

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

The Sacrament of Reconciliation on an individual basis will continue to be offered according to our regular schedule here in the parish office. Providing the opportunity to experience this Sacrament of Forgiveness and Healing, particularly in the Season of Lent, is an essential part of the ministry of the Church. We will ensure a six-foot, safe distance of space between priest and penitent whether you choose to celebrate anonymously behind a screen, or face to face.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

We will keep you informed of changes or additions to the measures that are currently in place in these highly fluid and rapidly changing circumstances in order to protect and safeguard your health and well-being and all those whom we serve, and to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus. Let us remember to keep each other, our state, our nation, and the community of the world affected by this virus in our daily prayers as we ask for consolation, healing, strength, and peace. Let us also pray for all health care providers to include medical professionals, first responders, and care givers who are in the front lines of the coronavirus response. Above all else, let us trust in our God, care for one another, and remember the promise of the Lord that he will always be with us, and with him we need not be afraid for he we will never leave us alone!

May God bless us all,

Verónica Kelley

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