



Dear Parishioners,

As I write to you this week, all of us find ourselves in a strange and unfamiliar world. The world as we know it has been turned upside down. [This week the Bishops of Ohio, in response to the growing threat of the coronavirus, have suspended all public Masses and liturgies at least through Holy Week and Easter.](#) This is something completely unprecedented and most uncomfortable. The dangerous coronavirus is very contagious and spreads easily in gatherings of people, so all gatherings of more than a few people must be avoided. The suspension of public Masses is absolutely necessary to stem the spread of the virus, but not having the assembly of God's people present in church leaves me feeling disoriented, lost and sad. I can only imagine how you feel. We must endure this time when we are deprived of the consolation of gathering together for Mass and pray that God may hasten the day when the emergency has passed.

[I assure you that the priests of St. Andrew are offering Mass privately and we are fulfilling the Mass intentions which have been requested for each Mass.](#) I urge everyone to unite themselves spiritually with the celebration of the Mass even though you are not able to be present and may not actually receive the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. Offer to God your prayers, works, joys and sufferings of each day "in union with the holy sacrifice of the Mass."

Make an act of "[Spiritual Communion.](#)" Remember that the priest who is celebrating the Mass is your representative before God. He "goes up to the altar of God" like Moses went up on Mount Sinai while the people stayed behind. Please know that our priests are remembering you at the altar. It is important that even though you cannot attend Mass or receive Communion on Sunday, and while the obligation continues to be dispensed, it is still important to "keep holy the Lord's day," especially through prayer. I urge you to spend time in prayer, to read and reflect upon the Sunday readings, to watch televised broadcasts of the Mass and use other resources to unite yourself and your family to the celebration of the Mass.

Please remember to use the resources on the [FORMED website](#), which is accessible to all St. Andrew parishioners free of charge. This site provides many resources for all ages.

Please remember to support St. Andrew Parish. There can be no Sunday collection during this time, but our expenses continue.

Baptisms, weddings, funerals and confessions can be done during this time, albeit in a different way. The number of people permitted to be present for these sacraments is strictly limited. Individual confessions are possible upon request, but communal penance services will not be offered at this time.

Sacramental visits are only done for those who are in danger because of their health or are dying. Because of the concerns of spreading the virus, ordinary routine visits to the homebound to bring Holy Communion are suspended. All other parish meetings, classes, gatherings and social events are suspended for the duration of this emergency.

The church will remain closed and locked at all times in order to encourage all people to stay at home and to prevent the spread of the virus.

I look forward to the day when we will be reunited before the altar of God in our beautiful church of St. Andrew. Until then may God protect you from all harm and keep you healthy and strong.

Your Pastor,

Msgr. Stephan Moloney