

Special Announcement
from Fr. Reif

This afternoon, Monday March 16th, Archbishop Schnurr and the Ohio Bishops Conference suspended the public celebration of the Holy Mass through Easter Sunday. That means there will be no scheduled Masses at either St. Simon or St. Al's through Easter Sunday. All the Catholic Faithful are dispensed from their Sunday Obligation to attend Holy Mass through at least Easter Sunday. This has been done because of the grave threat the spread of the Coronavirus poses to public health. This virus is serious, and we must take it seriously. I know that there are many, myself among them, that will be disappointed that Mass will not be available for the next several weeks. However, the Archbishop and Ohio bishops are acting for deep concern for the common good, and for public health. The priests of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, myself included will be celebrating Mass privately, and I for the intention of the People of St. Simon and St. Al's and for the lifting of this coronavirus pandemic. All other Mass intentions will be rescheduled in the future. Please be assured of my prayers for you, and please continue to pray for me and our parish communities. Also, please keep an eye on our websites www.stalsontheohio.org and www.stsimonparish.org for further news and updates. The websites are being maintained regularly now.

In case of a funeral, at this time (subject to change as the situation with the pandemic changes) we will be permitted to celebrate funerals with congregations of less than 50 people only, and all those attending must be asymptomatic of the coronavirus. This of course will be managed case by case.

As for the other Sacraments: The Sacrament of Confession will still be available for the faithful on Saturday at St Al's from 3:30-4 PM (note change in time), and on Monday evenings at St. Simon from 7-7:30 PM. Confession is also available by appointment. I can be reached by email at frbryanreif@gmail.com, or at the office number at St. Simon for appointments for confession. Email is more reliable. We will not be using the confessionals as the Health experts recommend not using a confined space like a confessional, so I will hear in the main body of the church. There should be no more than ten people in church, and if there is a line, keep more than six feet from one another, and plenty of distance from where confessions are heard to preserve confidentiality. Please also email or call if someone needs the Anointing of the Sick. Again, Anointing is for the seriously ill or dying. One does not need to wait until the last moment to ask for the anointing. Protocols are being developed by the Archdiocese for ministering to those who may have the Coronavirus.

The Archdiocese is recommending we open our churches for private prayer. St. Simon Church will be open for private prayer of the Faithful from 9 AM-Noon on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. St. Al's Church will be open for private prayer from 9 AM to Noon Monday through Friday. The Archdiocese and public health officials require no more than 10 people in a space at one time. While church will be unlocked, there should be no organized groups, no organized rosaries as a group, etc. This is individual private prayer before Our Lord Truly Present in the Blessed Sacrament in the Tabernacle. Again, keep plenty of space between each other, and no more than ten in church at any one time.

Even though Public Masses, and activities and programs we normally do will not be available to us, this is a time that we need as the Faithful of Holy Mother Church to double

down on our personal and private prayer. Each of us should spend time everyday storming heaven with our prayers for an end to this pandemic, for protection from the virus, and for our neighbors, families, and friends. No-one is unaffected by this.

I recommend the following for daily prayer:

The Most Holy Rosary

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy

Novena to Our Lady Health of the Sick

The Way of the Cross

Reading of the Daily, and especially the Sunday Readings from the Scriptures

Watch Mass on TV at EWTN, or watch it streamed from our Cathedral at

www.catholiccincinnati.org

Keeping up our daily prayers is critically important, and I dare say the duty of every baptized Christian always, but especially in times such as these.

Consider downloading the “myparish” app from iTunes and the google play store. Search for St. Aloysius on the Ohio, you will find the daily readings, prayers and the bulletin right at your fingertips. We will also be sending notifications of any changes through the app.

Also, as a practical and temporal matter, I raise our awareness that while Mass and activities are suspended, our parish bills are not. Please consider giving online or mailing Sunday donations to our parishes so we can continue to pay our bills and keep current. This is critically important!!! When we re-open after all this is over, we want to not be in a big financial hole trying to climb out.

Finally, please stay safe! Stay Healthy! Follow the directives to remain socially distant so that the spread of this virus can be stopped, and if you need medical help, call your health care providers, and if it's an emergency, call 911.

God's Blessings upon all of us,

Fr. Bryan T. Reif

Pastor