

Church of Saint John and Saint Mary

March 19, 2020

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In just a couple of days, our world was turned upside down and our normal daily routines disrupted if not shattered. As we watch the number of people infected with the coronavirus rise exponentially, we are acutely conscious of how much remains unknown. We don't know how long this pandemic will last, how many people will be infected, and unfortunately how many will die.

We are called to live by the oxymoron, "social distancing" at a time when real human contact is more important than ever. Yet we are all acutely aware that avoiding contact as much as possible may be the only way of slowing and eventually halting the spread of this virus.

As Catholic believers, we are very blessed to have our Christian faith as our source of both comfort and strength. Although the archbishop has cancelled all daily and Sunday public Masses for the foreseeable future, I continue to offer Mass privately each day for the intentions that have been requested. Even though it is not the same as attending Mass, we can watch the Mass on television or the internet. Our own personal prayer life becomes even more important during this time. The rosary, reading Sacred Scripture, meditation, contemplation centering prayer are all ways of deepening our relationship with God.

Due to the virus all baptisms will be postponed indefinitely. All funerals will be celebrated in the Upper Church with members of the immediate family present.

Information about our religious Education Program will be sent out within the next two weeks.

We are very concerned about our brothers and sisters, especially but not exclusively our elderly and homebound, who may be in need during this very difficult time. Please, if you know of anyone who could use some assistance, call the church office, 914-238-3260.

We are continuing the with our Annual Easter Outreach in spite of the virus. Instead of asking for a list of items, we are asking for monetary donations to be mailed to the church or online at the parish website – sjsmrc.com We will purchase gift cards for those who are in need in our parish and community.

Finally, I must ask that you continue to support our parish financially. Your donations provide the necessary monies to meet our normal operating expenses. Contributions can be made online through WESHARE or mailed to the parish.

Thanking you for your kind attention and asking for your prayers,
I remain yours in Christ,

Fr. O'Halloran
Pastor

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