

March 12, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

In light of the current Corona-virus (COVID-19) situation, I thought it might be helpful to share with you the decisions we have made in order to protect our community, to comply with best current medical practice and the advice coming from the civil authorities. Hopefully, this will help us all to stay a little safer and to stem the spread of the virus.

Of course, we also recommend that everyone continues to exercise reasonable care by washing our hands regularly or using hand sanitizers. If you begin to feel unwell contact your regular medical provider and follow their instructions. Please see the bulletin for all other activities and ministries here at your parish community. <https://www.stfrancisa2.com/>

As the situation changes, we will review these decisions but for the foreseeable future we are recommending the following:

SUNDAY MASSES:

- That all our Seniors and those with any serious underlying medical conditions stay at home. ***To assist them to continue to be part of our worshipping community we will live stream both our 5pm Saturday evening Mass and our regular 10:30am Sunday morning Mass.***
- Spanish Mass- ***will be live streamed.***
- At our Weekend Masses we will continue to dispense with the Greeting, the Sign of Peace and the holding of hands during the Our Father.
- Holy Communion will be distributed with the Host only.
- We ask ALL communicants to receive in the hand.
- For those unable to receive Holy Communion we invite you to make a Spiritual Communion <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions/act-of-spiritual-communion-339>
- No Children's Liturgy until after Easter.
- Sunday Coffee and Donuts is cancelled until further notice.

WEEKDAY MASSES:

- Holy Communion will be distributed under one form- again it will be given in the hand only. ***Where possible we will live-stream these Masses so that all can continue to join us in our daily prayer.***

LENTEN EVENTS:

- The following Lenten Events have been postponed or modified to a simpler form. ***Please note that our parish church will remain open for quiet prayer- a great opportunity to pray for others and for healing for our world.***
 - Thursday evenings- simple prayer at 6:30pm.
 - Men's Ministry on March 19 – talk postponed.

- Friday morning talks- postponed to the Easter season.
- Friday Stations of the Cross- simple form- open to all.
- Friday Fish Dinners- cancelled.
- Parish Pilgrimage to DC- postponed to a later date.
- All Day Confessions on March 19-TBD.
- Tuesday evenings with David Seitz- postponed to a later date.
- Our Lenten Grocery Drive- postponed to the Easter season.
- Lenten Small Groups- decisions to be decided by each group, we encourage participants to continue to read the assigned book and to share thoughts and ideas electronically.
- Unidos por la oración meetings- postponed to a later date.

EMERGENCY FOOD DRIVE COVID 19

With the cancellations of schools in our community and the run on supplies and food due to COVID 19 comes greater need for the less fortunate in our midst. School children who normally receive free lunches now go hungry. Families in financial difficulties go without needed preventive health care.

Can you help? We are having an emergency food drive at St. Francis of Assisi Church Friday, March 13 to Friday, March 20. Supplies (listed below) can be dropped off in the Parish Activities Center (PAC) from 9am-4pm this Friday and after all Masses Saturday and Sunday. On Monday, March 16-Friday, March 20, supplies may be dropped off in the PAC from 9am-4pm.

Hope Clinic, serving the Ypsilanti-Ann Arbor area, is severely short on the following supplies at a time when the people arriving in great need is much higher:

Masks
 Hand Sanitizer
 Cereal
 Toiletries and Toilet Paper
 Canned Goods
 Whole Grain Food
 Diapers
 Wipes
 Canned Meat
 Hearty Soups

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:

- No Confirmation Meetings March 15. Confirmation interviews for March 24 & 26 are delayed until April 21 & 23. Please encourage your students to continue to complete their red book and sponsor magazine. Confirmation interview sign up will be available within the week and sent by email.

The meetings for First Eucharist (scheduled for March 18 & 22) have been delayed until April 19 at 2:30pm & April 22 at 6:30pm in the PAC.

No Nursery during Sunday Mass and no Children's Liturgy until after Easter.

No Religious Education classes March 15, 18, 22, 25.

No Classes for children in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd on Sundays, March 15 and 22.

For details on changes to our current Religious Education calendar please contact the Religious Education Office -734 821 2130 or stfreled@stfrancis2.org

SCHOOL COMMUNITY:

- For details on changes to our current Parish School calendar please see the website or contact the School Office at 734 821-2200. as of today St. Francis School is closed until April 6.
 - Toasty Tuesdays- cancelled.
 - Blessing of Dads- cancelled.
 - 8th Grade trip to Washington DC- TBD

HOLY WATER:

- Holy Water Fonts on the side door entrances have been emptied. The main baptismal Font continues as is- the water here is free-flowing and purified- and according to the CDC the virus cannot be passed by water.

SUNDAY COLLECTIONS:

- We anticipate a serious fall off in Sunday collections and yet the work of our parish community will continue. So please keep us in mind during this time of crisis. Remember you can continue to gift to the parish by mail or electronically. You may give a one-time donation or a recurring gift by either credit card or by entering your checking account details at: <https://giving.parishsoft.com/App/Giving/stfrancisannarbor/>

Finally, I know that this is a time of great concern for us all. This is a serious situation, one that calls for all of us to play our part and to abide by the advice given by the civil, diocesan and medical authorities. In all our decisions our primary aim is to take care of you all and to continue the work and ministry of the Gospel at this time of great need. Together let us continue to pray for the healing of all who have been affected by this virus, all those who minister to and care for the sick and for an end to this health crisis as soon as possible.

Fr. James