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A Message from Your Pastor, Rev. George Fleming

Please know of my prayers for our entire community and beyond as we implement unprecedented measures to deal with the threat of the coronavirus. Most of us are in a state of shock. I also know of the incredible faith that sustains us, and we will be stronger as we pray for each other and for all those affected. I will continue to stay in touch — and know that we are always here for you.

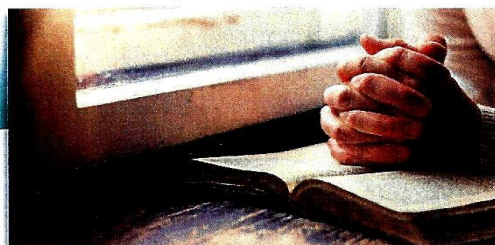
The *Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany* (RCDA) is joining our local, state, and national leaders to curb this threat and to help keep the virus from spreading. Attached, you'll find a statement released by the Diocese, and more information will follow. Essentially, it means that all liturgies, programming, and other events scheduled at our churches will cease until further notice. While our offices will be monitored by the staff, regular hours will cease for the time being as well. I thank our staff and volunteers for their flexibility and for keeping things together during this time.

I promise to hold you all in prayer and continue celebrating daily liturgies in private. I will pay special attention to the Mass intentions of the day, even though they also will be rescheduled. I will be updating you soon with my Pastor's Blog and other information as it comes to us.

Social distancing cannot keep us apart. As St. Paul writes:

"For I am certain of this ... nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, nor created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:35-36).

God bless you! -Fr. George



From the *Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany* (RCDA): ALL MASSES IN THE DIOCESE OF ALBANY CANCELED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE; FAITHFUL URGED TO TAKE TIME TO PRAY AT HOME

Due to growing concerns and medical advice related to the rapid spread of COVID-19 in social settings, Bishop Edward B. Scharfenberger has announced that all regularly scheduled public Masses in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany — except weddings and funerals — will be canceled until further notice. Churches will, however, remain open for private prayer, pending further regulations.

In addition, all Confirmations have been canceled until further notice and will be rescheduled. Funerals and weddings may be attended only by close family and in accordance with social distancing and capacity requirements. Further restrictions may force a change in those guidelines as we go forward.

"Although we know how difficult it is for Catholics to be without the Mass and without the Eucharist, we must do our part to help 'flatten the curve' and stop the spread of COVID-19 in order to protect the most vulnerable among us," Bishop Scharfenberger said when making the announcement. "I encourage the faithful to pray and fast as we continue our journey through this season of Lent. Try to include at least 15 minutes of daily intentional prayer, with family where possible and safe. Use the Bible, say the Rosary, watch Mass on TV, and please remember to pray for those who are suffering from the Coronavirus worldwide and for all those in the medical community who are on the front lines."

The Diocese of Albany is keeping Catholics apprised of changes, updates, and resources on its dedicated Web page: rcda.org/coronavirus. In addition, a Faith at Home page includes links to live-streamed Mass, daily Scripture readings, saints of the day, and suggestions for creating a sacred space at home: rcda.org/coronavirus/resources.



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