

As most of you are aware, Bishop Powers has suspended the public celebration of Masses until further notice because of the COVID19. What does that mean for us at Good Shepherd?

There will be no public Masses at this time—weekdays or weekends;

There will be no church activities until further notice.

But, there will still be...

Church doors open during the day, at least until 3:30 pm, for individuals who wish to stop by to pray before the Blessed Sacrament;

Adoration will be offered **Tuesday through Saturday, from Noon until 3 pm, and Sundays from 9 am until Noon, starting March 19.** HOWEVER, take note that when you come, if more than 10 people would be in the church, we ask that you return at another hour. Please spread out in the church to avoid close contact with others. Father Raj will be available for individual Confessions during most of those hours. Bishop has asked that individuals going to Confession go behind the screen. The kneeler will be wiped clean between people and hand sanitizer will be available in the confessional, in the entrance of the church, and on the table in the center aisle of church for everyone's use;

Reconciliation is strongly encouraged, especially during this Lenten season. If you are unable to go to Confession during the hours of Adoration, or prefer another private time, call the parish office to schedule it.

You should still gather with your families for private worship in your homes, be it to watch the Mass on television, pray together (i.e., Rosary or other special devotions), and read Scripture;

Bulletins will still be provided—some in the church entrance and they will also be posted on our parish website.

Although as “c”hurch we will not be gathering publicly for worship, at the same time each of us as “C”hurch (the universal Church) has opportunities to still practice what Jesus calls us to do: Prayer and Sacrifice. Pray in your homes (or by visiting the church for Adoration). Pray for end to the spread of this virus, for the weak and vulnerable, for those not working at this time, and for all the members of Good Shepherd. Sacrifice going to the movies, bowling, shopping or more during this Lenten season. And, practice works of mercy when you can. If you are healthy and able to pick up groceries for an elderly person to avoid their public contact, consider doing this. Concerned about someone who may not be feeling well? Remember to call them and assure their well-being. The Church will continue to be present always among us, in ways we probably never noticed before.

Through all of this, Cardinal Timothy Dolan reminds us of the words we hear in Scripture:

DO NOT WORRY.

DO NOT BE AFRAID. This phrase is in Scripture 365 times. Therefore, every day, let us be reminded not to fear.

We pray this virus will be short-lived and that soon we can return to worship with an even greater fervor, as we hunger during this time for the Holy Eucharist. In the meantime, search out new ways to grow in faith during Lent. We will try to keep in touch the best ways we can at this time—either via email or our parish website (Type in “Good Shepherd, Rib Lake, WI” in your browser, and choose the .org site.)