



DIocese OF BELLEVILLE

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**OFFICE OF WORSHIP**

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Dear Friends in Ministry,

**NOTE:** The following and all current guidelines can be found on our dedicated page at <https://www.diobelle.org/our-bishop/writings/1392>.

As all residents of the state comply with the order to stay at home and refrain from non-essential activities, we are nonetheless painfully aware that being cut off from the sacramental life of the church, especially the Eucharist, creates a great hardship for our people, indeed for all of us. However, we make this sacrifice for the common good, convinced that we, like all citizens, have a responsibility in preventing the spread of COVID-19. In fact, doing so will ensure that our people can return to the sacraments as soon as possible.

**Message from Bishop Braxton**

To offer our people as much pastoral care as possible during this time, please share this [message](#) from His Excellency, Bishop Edward K. Braxton.

In light of the executive order, please observe the following guidelines for the Sacrament of Reconciliation which is in effect until further notice. A note about the Holy Father's recent issuance of a [plenary indulgence](#) is included with this letter.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation**

Given that our churches are closed and a stay-at-home order is in effect:

- individual confessions are currently not possible; this includes virtual or phone confessions, which are never permissible, nor drive-thru confessions. Despite the good intentions around such novelty, we must attend to our underlying theological tradition of the sacrament, as well as support the stay-at-home order and its intended purpose – to keep people safe in their homes at this time.
- in keeping with longstanding pastoral practice when penitents' access to the sacrament is restricted, they can be assured that their sins are forgiven if they make an act of contrition with a firm resolve to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation after the stay-at-home order is lifted.
- the faithful should be encouraged to pray particular prayers or meditate on passages of the bible that you recommend to assist them in seeking the mercy and forgiveness of God and the grace of reconciliation.

We can serve our people well with pastoral tenderness if we recall for them that our Lord knows their hearts and desires to reconcile their lives to Him and He awaits their presence in the Sacrament once the stay-at-home order is lifted and our churches are re-opened. Sharing this message with our parishioners at this time could also prove to be a good reminder of the Church's precept of making a good confession at least once per year, which many parishioners strive to do during Lent.

### **Liturgy of the Word Service**

Attached are two modest *Liturgy of the Word* services for use at home. They are based on the readings for this Sunday, March 29, 2020, the Fourth Sunday of Lent and Palm Sunday, April 5, 2020.

Also attached is an explanation on "How to Pray the Rosary." This may be a new form of prayer for some individuals or an opportunity for parents to teach their children about the beauty and power of praying the rosary.

As I continue to discover resources that I think might be of value to and your parishioners, I will share them via email and then post them on the diocesan website for future use. If there is something in particular that you may be searching for, please let me know and I will try to find it for you.

Below are a few items that might be of interest.

### **FROM CATHOLIC PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION**

Looking for ways to support the families and parishes with whom you minister? Catholic publishers are sharing their online resources, some specially developed for this particular situation, for you to use.

- [Resources for Lent](#)
- [Resources for Easter](#)
- [Prayer resources for families](#)
- [Resources for Prayer and Engagement during Coronavirus](#)

### **MCGRATH INSTITUTE FOR CHURCH LIFE – UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME**

**Two free online courses** --*The Pillars of the Church*, explaining the basic doctrines of the faith *Saturdays with the Saints*, based on our popular game day lecture series.

### **LITURGY TRAINING PUBLICATIONS**

There are some great opportunities in the coming weeks for liturgical education, formation, and prayer with Liturgy Training Publications.

Following is the link for registration: [https://events-na11.adobeconnect.com/content/connect/c1/1081707727/en/events/catalog.html?folder-id=2638982016&from-origin=ltp.adobeconnect.com&OWASP\\_CSRFTOKEN=911b9fd9f03d944e36aba1e3207066124df5ba8a3ec64008e56a7aa3e0fcf786](https://events-na11.adobeconnect.com/content/connect/c1/1081707727/en/events/catalog.html?folder-id=2638982016&from-origin=ltp.adobeconnect.com&OWASP_CSRFTOKEN=911b9fd9f03d944e36aba1e3207066124df5ba8a3ec64008e56a7aa3e0fcf786)

## FAMILY AND YOUTH RESOURCES

Loyola Press is offering free resources to families on [faith, family and fun](#). They are also providing a [resource](#) to help teachers, catechists and parents explain COVID-19 to their children.

## DAILY PRAYER

If someone would like to begin the practice of daily prayer, there is an app that provides a new prayer session every day produced by Jesuit Ministries and is based on Ignatian Spirituality. <https://pray-as-you-go.org/>

Other resources for daily prayer:

<https://us.magnificat.net/free>

<https://latina/magnificat.net/gratis>

<https://ebreviary.com/ebreviary/ebreviary.nsf/prayersforeveryone.htm>

<https://offers.giveusthisday.org/free-resources>

## MASSES FOR VARIOUS NEEDS IN THE ROMAN MISSAL

The three Mass formularies provided under the heading *48. For Any Need* are particularly appropriate in the face of a health threat to the general public.

GIRM 374 states: “If any case of a graver need or of pastoral advantage should arise, at the direction of the Diocesan Bishop or with his permission, an appropriate Mass may be celebrated on any day except Solemnities, the Sundays of Advent, Lent, and Easter, days within the Octave of Easter, the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls’ Day), Ash Wednesday, and the days of Holy Week.”

Below please find sample petitions from the USCCB Committee on Divine Worship which may be included during the Prayer of the Faithful at Mass.

## SAMPLE PETITIONS

- We pray for those who are suffering in the current outbreak of coronavirus that with the help of their doctors and the support of our prayers, they may return to the fullness of health, we pray to the Lord. Lord hear our prayer.
- We pray for those who have died in the United States and around the world, due to the coronavirus, that they may share in the eternal life promised by Christ to those who faithfully follow him, we pray to the Lord. Lord hear our prayer.
- We pray for doctors, nurses, scientists, and public officials that they may strive to serve with compassion, wisdom, and understanding, we pray to the Lord. Lord hear our prayer.
- We pray that in the face of this pandemic around the world that our faith will be deepened and not shaken because of this worldwide suffering, we pray to the Lord. Lord hear our prayer.

## AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

It has long been a Catholic understanding that when circumstances prevent one from receiving Holy Communion, it is possible to make an Act of Spiritual Communion which is a source of grace. Spiritual Communion means uniting ourselves in prayer with Christ's sacrifice and worshipping Him in the consecrated bread and wine which are His Body and Blood. Always remember that the consecrated bread is the Body and Blood of Christ and the consecrated wine is the Body and Blood of Christ, even if you receive the Eucharist only under one species. The most common reason for making an Act of Spiritual Communion is when a person cannot attend Mass. An act of Spiritual Communion increases our desire to receive sacramental Communion and helps us avoid the sins that would make us unable to receive Holy Communion worthily.

## A PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.  
I love You above all things and I desire to receive You  
in my body, my soul, and my whole being.  
Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace You as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to You.  
Never permit me to be separated from You.  
Amen.

We are compiling a list of parishes in the Diocese of Belleville that are providing live-streamed and videotaped Masses. When that becomes available, we will forward that list to you. Some parishes are providing a livestream of daily Mass.

Thank you.

Lenten Blessings,

*Sue Huett*

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