



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

March 18, 2020

Dear Reverend Monsignor:

Dear Reverend Father:

I am writing to clarify several issues that have been raised following Bishop Crosby's Directives of March 17th regarding our pastoral practices in view of the COVID-19 Virus.

MASSES

All public celebrations of Mass and other devotions are suspended. All churches (including Adoration Chapels) are to **remain closed at all times** until further notice. It is not permitted to have the church open even for a few hours each day for prayer.

Where it is possible to stream Mass, this is to be done and parishioners are to be notified of this as well as televised Masses (Vision TV: Sunday 8:00 a.m.; Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. & 12:00 noon; Saturday 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. Salt+Light: Monday-Saturday 6:30 am. 9:30 a.m. (with Pope), 11:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.; Sunday 11:00 a.m. & 10:30 p.m.).

In addition to celebrating Sunday Mass privately, all Priests are encouraged to celebrate Mass privately each day for the intentions of their parishioners, for the medical personnel assisting the sick, and for an end to the COVID-19 outbreak.

PRAYER AT HOME

In this time of fasting from the Eucharist, parishioners should be encouraged to pray for other parishioners and for all those whose lives are being affected by the virus. The Rosary, prayerful reading of Sacred Scripture and other devotions are recommended. Pastors are encouraged to use whatever social media at their disposal to communicate with their parishioners.

FUNERALS

Funeral Masses are not permitted at this time; visitation and vigil services at funeral homes may take place according to the decision of local funeral homes and families of the deceased. However, Priests may, but are not required to, visit or offer prayers at the funeral home.

CONFESSIONS

Regarding the Sacrament of Reconciliation, no scheduled Confessions are permitted. The Sacrament may be celebrated by appointment provided that social distance can be maintained. The Sacrament of Reconciliation may always be celebrated in danger of death.

BAPTISMS

Although Baptisms may be celebrated privately, it is recommended that they be postponed until a later date.

COMMUNION

The Eucharist is not to be taken to parishioners who are homebound at this time. Similarly, it is not possible to bring the Eucharist to Senior Residences and Nursing Homes.

SCRUTINIES

His Excellency Bishop Douglas Crosby dispenses all the Elect from the celebration of the Scrutinies.

HOSPITAL VISITATION

Visitation in hospitals is strictly limited. Further directives regarding hospital ministry will be forthcoming.

HOLY WEEK & TRIDUUM CELEBRATIONS

These will be addressed in a subsequent memo as we approach these days.

Thank you for your attention to these updated directives in force in the Diocese of Hamilton.

Let us continue to be united in prayer as we place our trust in God's providence during this pandemic.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Murray J. Kroetsch

Monsignor Murray J. Kroetsch, PH, VG
Chancellor

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