

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

We are all well aware of the threat posed by the coronavirus outbreak. In his concern for public health and the well being of each of us, Bishop Checchio has temporarily suspended the public celebration of Holy Mass in the churches of our diocese. This means that Holy Mass will not be celebrated publicly in our church from Wednesday, March 18th until at least Friday, April 3rd. The Bishop will reconsider the situation, in consultation with public health officials, at that time.

During this time, all scheduled Masses will be celebrated privately by our priests. The intentions for each Mass will be honored and prayed for – as required by Canon Law.

During this time our Church will remain open during the day for private prayer and reflection. Please use good judgment and common sense when coming to the Church to pray.

Fr. Wojciech and I will be available to you for private Confessions, Anointing of the Sick, spiritual counselling and all other priestly ministry. You may reach us through the parish office at 908 – 454 – 0112. It is our intention to be there for you as we confront this terrible epidemic together, with God's help.

Above all else, let us pray together for the healing of those afflicted by the coronavirus, and all of our sick brothers and sisters. Let us remember that, throughout history, Christian people have turned to the Lord Jesus and His Blessed Mother for help and strength in times of illness and distress. Like our ancestors in faith, we will get through this together with God's help.

In addition to your usual prayers, I ask all of you to pray the following prayer each day – or at least for nine days as a novena – asking for the help of our Blessed Lord and His holy Mother.

God bless you!

Fr. John

A PRAYER FOR PROTECTION IN TIME OF PANDEMIC

O Mary, you always brighten our path as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who, at the Cross, took part in Jesus' pain while remaining steadfast in faith. O loving Mother, you know what we need, and we are confident you will provide for us as at Cana in Galilee. Intercede for us with your Son Jesus, the Divine Physician, for those who have fallen ill, for those who are vulnerable, and for those who have died. Intercede also for those charged with protecting the safety and health of others and for those who are tending to the sick and seeking a cure. Help us, O Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do as we are told by Jesus, who took upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows, so as to lead us through the Cross, to the glory of the Resurrection. Amen.