



St. Ignatius of Loyola
Roman Catholic Church and School
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Tuesday IV in Lent
24 March 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

Last week, our Ordinary, the Most Reverend Bishop Steven J. Raica promulgated our Catholic ecclesial provincial, diocesan and parochial policies regarding the COVID-19 virus. These policies included suspensions of all public Masses and a dispensation from the obligation to attend Holy Mass on the Lord's Day. As a priest, I cannot imagine the sense of loss many of you may feel as a result of our pastoral anchor in the Eucharist. However, it is precisely this sense of loss – that something is not right without our contact with the Most Holy Body and Blood of our loving Savior – that underscores your faith that our Holy Mother the Church provides more for her daughters and sons than a “thing to be taken”. Rather we await with true hunger a person to be loved, honored, obeyed and adored: Jesus Christ whom we know to be the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6). Truly I condole with you as I miss your presence at the altar of God who gives gladness and joy (Psalm 43:4).

Beginning this week, rather than celebrate Masses at odd times to ensure that Mass takes place without encouraging gatherings, I will follow Bishop Raica's clarified order to hold the Masses at the usual times and *in secreto*, that is, behind locked doors. Bishop Raica wants his priests to celebrate Mass in this way so that all the faithful of his parishes know the hour during which to make a spiritual communion with their brethren of the parish. **For the foreseeable future the church will be open to individual visits to the Blessed Sacrament Sunday through Thursday, from eight in the morning through seven in the evening, Friday from eight in the morning until three in the afternoon, and Saturday from eight in the morning until six o'clock in the evening, except when closed for Mass *in secreto*.**

Confessions will remain available, and obeying Bishop Raica's clarified order, I will now be present **at the additionally scheduled times, and at the times before what would have been the regularly scheduled Masses.**

According to diocesan guidelines, please telephone the office before attempting to enter. Contact your physician at once before approaching anyone if you feel feverish or otherwise sick.

Spiritual direction from clergy, if you are open to it, may be obtained over the telephone. To initiate this, please telephone the office. Please refer to the diocesan website, and FORMED.org through our website, www.stignatiusr.org, for reflections, devotions, or video transcriptions of the Holy Mass.

Because diocesan policy and Federal law require us to pay all faculty and staff who are willing to work during these days, please keep the financial welfare of your parish in your prayers and consider giving on-line or through the mail as best as your economic circumstances allow.

The next time I write, I hope to dedicate the text to further diocesan liturgical policy concerning Holy Week.

United with you in Christ and His Mother,
Rev. Father Rolando Silva
Parish Priest