

March 16, 2020

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

Coronavirus outbreaks are now occurring in Georgia resulting in the closing of Houston County schools. As of today, the Most Rev. Gregory Hartmayer, Bishop of Savannah, has ordered the temporary cessation of all public Masses throughout the Diocese of Savannah. This includes weekday Masses and Sunday Masses. On April 1, he will advise pastors regarding what the Mass situation will be for Passion Sunday (a.k.a. Palm Sunday) and Holy Week. Naturally, people are excused from their Sunday Mass obligation when public Masses are unavailable. People are still encouraged to observe Sundays by watching Masses online (such as the 10:00 a.m. Sunday Mass on the cathedral's website at www.savannahcathedral.org or via etwn.com) or doing some other form of devotions such as reflecting upon the Mass readings.

Please remember to continue to support the parish with your donations / tithing. Checks may be mailed to the church office and electronic tithing is available as well (www.stpatrickga.org/home).

Note that Fr. Eric and Deacon Jim will conduct private Masses on a regular basis, honoring the parish's arranged special Mass intentions. The church will also be open and available for public prayer and private devotions during the new office hours (see below):

New Church Office Hours

For the foreseeable future, the new office schedule at St. Patrick Church is Monday – Thursday, 9:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. (except for the lunch hour of Noon – 1:00 p.m.).

We are all encouraged to practice what is referred to as social distancing in order to be safe and impede the potential spread of the virus. This includes refraining from physical contact and avoiding public gatherings of 50 or more people except for necessary functions. The below parish schedule, which notes upcoming changes, is effective immediately. Please refer to this rather than what is listed in the bulletin. For your convenience, items are listed in alphabetical order.

ACTS

Please contact your group leader concerning schedule changes and meeting locations.

Church Office

At this time, the church office will remain open during our new business hours (Monday through Thursday, 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., except for the lunch hour of Noon – 1:00).

Confessions

Confessions on Saturdays from 4:00 – 4:45 p.m. will take place as normal. Moreover, Fr. Nick and I will both hear confessions on April 4 (the Vigil of Passion Sunday, a.k.a., Palm Sunday) from 3:00 – 4:45 p.m. Note that confessions do not take place on Holy Saturday (April 11).

Country Breakfast

On hiatus during the pandemic.

Cursillo

Please contact your group leader concerning schedule changes and meeting locations.

Day of Reflection: "Revealing the Face of Christ" (March 21)

Postponed until a later date (to be announced).

"I Am Patrick" Movie (March 18)

As the pastor of the church, I do not have the ability to cancel the movie; that is a decision that can only be made by the management of the Galleria Mall movie theater. At this time, the plan is for the movie to take place as scheduled (6:30 p.m.). Naturally, people have the option to go or not. If you have gotten your tickets and elect not to go, the church office is willing to refund your ticket. It would be helpful to us if you could return your tickets to the church office prior to 4:30 p.m. Wednesday (but we will be happy to refund them at a later time if you cannot make it here by then).

Easter Egg Hunt (April 12)

The Easter Egg Hunt is postponed until a later date (to be announced). The Easter Bunny is happy to accommodate us in this regard.

Finance Council

Will meet April 21 at 6:00 p.m. as scheduled.

Girl Scouts

Please contact your group leader concerning schedule changes and meeting locations.

Holy Week Schedule

To be announced.

Knights of Columbus

Please contact the Grand Knight concerning schedule changes and meeting locations. The Country Breakfast is on hiatus during the pandemic.

Ladies Auxiliary

Please contact the Auxiliary President concerning schedule changes and meeting locations.

Living the Eucharist

Due to the small number of members, the *Living the Eucharist* groups may continue to meet in the church. Naturally, being a voluntary devotion, no one should feel compelled to attend the gatherings during the pandemic.

Masses & Holy Week Schedule

See above message concerning the cessation of public Masses (by order of the bishop). The situation concerning Masses on Passion Sunday (a.k.a., Palm Sunday), Holy Week & Easter will be announced in April.

Newcomers Lunch (March 22)

Postponed until a later date (to be announced).

Parish Council (March 30)

Will meet March 30 at 6:30 p.m. as scheduled.

R.C.I.A.

The remaining classes will take place as scheduled. Classes will meet in the parish library (a.k.a, the double classroom) rather than the cry room.

Religious Education & LifeTeen

Classes & youth events are cancelled. Please see separate emails from Mary Pangborn concerning assignments for students to do at home.

“Revealing the Face of Christ”

See “Day of Reflection” above.

Saint Patrick Movie (March 18)

See “I Am Patrick” movie above.

Saint Patrick’s Day Mass (March 17)

The 10:00 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. Masses are hereby canceled, as is the planned reception.

Stations of the Cross

All remaining Stations of the Cross and the meals associated with them are canceled. This includes the Stations of the Cross that normally takes place at 12:10 p.m. on Good Friday. People are encouraged to reflect on the Stations of the Cross as a private or family devotion in their homes, or to do the stations individually in the church during normal office hours (the booklets are on the round table under the clock in the sanctuary).

If you have any questions, please contact the office staff.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Fr. Eric Filmer
Pastor