



IMMACULATE HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH

2926 North Williams Avenue

Portland, Oregon 97227

Phone: (503) 287-3724

Fax: (503) 287-5011

Email: immaculateheart_portland@archdpdx.org

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

March 24, 2020

The coronavirus has made our life difficult and forced us to stay at home out of our plans. As a parish we need to stay connected in any means we can in this time and especially by talking to each other more frequently to know what is going on with our sisters and brothers at Immaculate Heart Paris and even the whole of the Archdiocese.

Expect phone calls from parishioners as we are trying to stay united and pray for each other. Let us continue to pray for our sick members and ask God to heal them and help them to stay calm as some of them may not continue to enjoy the services they used to receive before the storm of this deadly disease.

Lately, the Archbishop has uplifted us spiritually by given us a wonderful prayer to be used by all of us as we struggle to contain this pandemic virus. This prayer "*Archdiocesan Prayer for our Time*" in English and in Vietnamese is attached with this message.

I have received phone calls also regarding the practice of the Sacraments in this time we stay at home. For example a parishioner called asking me if possible to go and celebrate Holy Mass at their home. The instructions we priests received after consulting with the office of the Archbishop who directs us how to implement the Liturgical practices is that such Masses will be against the spirit of the current social distancing measures and would unnecessarily put the health of those present at risk.

Also he said "Allowing such Masses would create an unfair system of preference within our parishes and place our priests in an untenable position". So we have been encouraged not to celebrate Holy Mass in parishioner's homes at this time.

As for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, it cannot be administered over the telephone, the Apostolic Penitentiary has issued a decree which provides for the forgiveness of sins (even mortal) in these circumstances which says. "Where the individual faithful find themselves in the painful impossibility of receiving sacramental absolution, it should be remembered that perfect contrition, coming from the love of God, beloved above all things, expressed by a sincere request for forgiveness (that which the penitent is at present able to express) and accompanied by votum confessionis, that is, by the firm resolution to have recourse, as soon as possible, to sacramental confession, obtains forgiveness of sins, even mortal ones (cf. CCC, no. 1452)." [Apostolic Penitentiary 19 March 2020]

What the priest can do over the telephone however is to guide the patient through a brief examination of conscience and an act of contrition leading to an expression of penitence and a request for forgiveness.

Let us continue to be united in prayer during these challenging times.

Fr. Paulinus. 