

Dear Most Holy Redeemer Parishioners,

“I’m 80 years old and I never remember the church being closed.” That comment was made to me this past Saturday morning as I was locking up church after our last scheduled Mass until further notice. I couldn’t remember church ever being closed either. 9/11 didn’t close churches. The great blizzard of 1967 didn’t close churches. I walked up to church through the deep, unplowed snow on the Friday morning after the blizzard to serve Mass. School was closed, but not church.

With that history, it’s very strange to now have our churches closed until further notice due to the coronavirus. Another person remarked to me after Mass on Saturday, “This is a time when we need our faith the most.” That is very true. We do need our faith at a time like this. There are several gospel passages in which the Apostles are out fishing when a storm comes up and threatens to swamp their boat. It is then that Jesus comes to them, either walking on the water or waking up from the nap He was taking in the boat. While our Lord is always with us, it is in moments of crisis that He is often more near to us than at other times. That is something we all need to remember.

Our Lord is with us. Let’s try to be with Him at this time. I hope that you will continue to pray each day. We can pray that this current pandemic will be contained soon. We can pray for all those who are affected by the current crisis. We should pray not just for those who have the virus or who have been exposed to it, but also all those affected by the virus in other ways, such as those whose livelihood is being adversely affected.

While Masses are cancelled, schools closed, and most parish activities and events are put on hold, we will continue to serve you as best we can during this time. Some services will be available on a limited basis. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered at its usual time of 4:00-4:30 PM on Saturday. If you had a baptism scheduled, we will still be able to celebrate that sacrament with you. It will still be possible to have a funeral or a wedding provided that the congregation in attendance is small. Cautionary measures would still have to be followed. We are looking into live-streaming Mass. Being technologically illiterate in many ways, I’m not sure what is involved, but we are looking into it. There are many opportunities already available to watch a televised Mass. They are listed on our parish website (mostholyredeemer.org) and Facebook page. The church will be open for people who wish to come in and pray from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM, Monday-Friday. The Adoration Chapel will have its regular hours. The parish office will be open from 9:00 AM-4:00 PM, Monday-Friday. If you need a priest, please call the rectory (708-425-5354). If you get the answering machine, please wait to hear the numbers for each priest’s voicemail. You will get in touch with a priest much faster if you leave a message with the priest rather than the front desk. (My voicemail number is 209, Fr. Paul’s is 205, and Fr. Adamich’s is 212.)

This is a situation that is constantly changing. Any changes or additions to what we are doing as a parish, or any Archdiocesan changes will be posted on our parish website and Facebook page. Information will also be posted on the church doors. We will be praying for you. Please pray for us too.

In Christ,

Fr. Jim Hyland