

As the weather keeps changing each day, one day it is raining, another it is sunny, and another it is snowing, so too is the information regarding the COVID-19. We no sooner put out information, and the next moment it changes. Therefore, if you have internet, keep checking our websites ([www.mystcatherines.org](http://www.mystcatherines.org) and/or [www.lowafc.org](http://www.lowafc.org)), and also our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/mystcatherines/](http://www.facebook.com/mystcatherines/)) for the newest information. As you will notice, we decided not to put a calendar together, because it changes continuously. However, hopefully the schedule in the bulletin here and the information on our websites and Facebook will be helpful.

As you will notice below, we are offering several opportunities for our Area Faith Community (AFC) to pray together.

**STILL STAY CONNECTED WITH YOUR FAITH COMMUNITY.** Your local church or parish is your family as well, which is comprised of individual families. We usually come together as a family to do the will of God and more especially to pray through/in the Holy Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, Funerals, Parish Festivals, Holy Rosary, Religious Education et cetera. Let this global pandemic or corona virus outbreak not distance us from each other spiritually. There are things we can still do together as members of our parish or Area Faith Community, though for our own interest we have been advised to maintain social distance from each other. Remember the saying; "a family that prays together stays together". This was very evident in the lives of our ancestors or fathers in faith. For instance; during the reign of King Darius; the King signed a law which mandated his subjects not to worship any other god but to worship him. The Temple of Jerusalem was a place of worship for the Jews and there was in the Temple the Ark of the Covenant which serves as the symbolic representation of God. Wherever the Jews were, whenever they prayed, they always face the temple of Jerusalem thereby connecting themselves to the temple which is their place of worship. When Daniel had no opportunity to pray in the temple, he always prayed in his room facing the temple of Jerusalem, thereby connecting himself to the Ark of the Covenant in the temple (Daniel 6). Your Priests, Deacon and the staff have decided that we still pray as a parish or family and maintain our connection to God through our parish spiritual activities. That is why we decided to be having Holy Mass on live stream, Eucharistic Adoration, Holy Rosary through conference calls, etcetera. It is good that we all participate in these spiritual exercises which are geared towards nourishing our spiritual lives in the midst of the global crisis. Let us still show God our faith in Him and support each other in prayers through all the resources which were made available to us at this moment. The early Christians were known for praying together in the periods of crisis (Acts 12). Take for example the Japanese Catholic Church. They went 200 years without priests, Masses, or public gatherings of faith, yet their faith never wavered and their community was strengthened in faith throughout those 200 years of crisis. Please let us emulate these our forefathers in their prayer style.

These are the things that our AFC is offering. Keep in mind things can change one moment to the next:

- **Daily rosary through conference calling at 12:00pm.** Each day, starting Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, we will be inviting people to call a certain number, punch in the special code, and then people can join in praying together the rosary from the comfort of your own homes. As of right now, the limit is hundred people to call in, but we can extend that number of needed, just let us know if you cannot. We are in the process of getting volunteers to lead it, but all you have to do is call the number, enter the code, and you can join others from our AFC in praying the rosary to end this virus. Here is the phone number and access code to use. **Call # 1-408-418-9388 use access code: 620677749** (If you don't have free long distance calls, there will be a charge.)
- **Live Stream with Religious Ed on Wednesday nights at 7pm.** We are encouraging all families, adults, and especially our youth to go on our websites or Facebook (see above) and click on "Watch Mass", and anyone for that matter, to join us in for prayer and weekly updates via YouTube Live Streaming. This is especially helpful for those who like to pray visually as well.
- **Be catechized through FORMED.** While you cannot get out, why not learn more about the faith and experience other avenues to grow in it. If you have not registered on formed, all you need to do is go to the website [www.formed.org](http://www.formed.org), and then click "Sign Up" if you don't have an account. Then you click "I belong to a parish or organization" and then you enter "St. Catherine" and choose the Redwood Falls St. Catherine. Then hit next, and enter in your personal information and your all set to watch videos, listen to audio books, or read books about the Catholic Faith.
- **Live Stream Adoration after the weekday Masses and the usual adoration times on weekends.** We are offering holy hours each day after Mass (M-F at 8:30-9:30am), Saturdays (9-10am), and Sundays (4-5PM). Again, go to our websites or Facebook page (see above) and click on "Watch Mass" to pray together. Although you will not be in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, through our gathered prayers from our homes, we are still uniting them, and experiencing the grace of the Blessed Sacrament.
- **3pm Hour of Mercy.** Please join us at 3pm and use the Divine Mercy Chaplet that is included here in the bulletin, and the image, to pray with our AFC for the mercy of God. (Pray in your own homes.)
- **Place Divine Mercy image to your front door as a reminder to "Trust in Jesus".** Please use the attached image of Divine Mercy and place it on your front doors, facing outward, so that you enter your house, or as others pass by will see it, reminding them and us that we need to trust in the Mercy of Jesus, especially during this difficult time. Please pray, "Jesus, I trust in you."

- **Live Stream Masses will continue daily.** Once again, we will continue the Live Streaming of Masses. We will celebrate Masses Monday through Saturday at 8am and Sunday at 10am. Again, go to our websites and Facebook for info (see above) and click on “Watch Mass”.
- **Church will be open during the day for prayer.** Although we will be not able to offer opportunities for people to come and pray with the Blessed Sacrament exposed, you can still come and adore and pray with the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. (Make sure you are doing the social distancing and sanitizing your hands when you come and go)
- **Recorded Stations of the Cross.** Please go to our websites or Facebook (see above) and click on “Watch Mass” to pray with our recorded Stations of the Cross. You can watch them at whatever parish you want and at any time.
- **Confessions will be offered Monday through Saturday at 6pm.** See the bulletin’s schedule of events for locations. However, we are asking that you go behind the screen that is located in the body of the church and make sure you sanitize your hands again as you come into the church and when you leave. If there is a line, make sure you are 6 feet apart. The following is from the United States Council of Bishops:

a) *“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).” A perfect contrition requires, the love of God, the sincere desire for forgiveness, the ardent commitment to receive the sacrament of reconciliation when available*

b) *“The gift of special Indulgences is granted to the faithful suffering from COVID-19 disease, commonly known as Coronavirus, as well as to health care workers, family members and all those who in any capacity, including through prayer, care for them.”*

- *This is a time of suffering, especially for those who have contracted COVID-19. As such, it may be a time for us to “rediscover ‘the same redemptive suffering of Christ’ (**Salvifici doloris**, 30).” Trusting in Christ,*

• *a **Plenary indulgence** is “granted to the faithful suffering from Coronavirus, who are subject to quarantine by order of the health authority in hospitals or in their own homes if, with a spirit detached from any sin, they unite spiritually through the media to the celebration of Holy Mass, the recitation of the Holy Rosary, to the pious practice of the Way of the Cross or other forms of devotion, or if at least they will recite the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer and a pious invocation to the Blessed Virgin Mary, offering this trial in a spirit of faith in God and charity towards their brothers and sisters, with the will to fulfil the usual conditions (sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion and prayer according to the Holy Father’s intentions), as soon as possible.”*

- *“Health care workers, family members and all those who, following the example of the Good Samaritan, exposing themselves to the risk of contagion, care for the sick of Coronavirus according to the words of the divine Redeemer: ‘Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends’ (Jn 15: 13), will obtain the same gift of the **Plenary Indulgence** under the same conditions.”*

*o An indulgence is “the expression of the Church’s full confidence of being heard by the Father when - in view of Christ’s merits and, by his gift, those of Our Lady and the saints - she asks him to mitigate or cancel the painful aspect of punishment by fostering its medicinal aspect through other channels of grace” (John Paul II, **General Audience, September 29, 1999**).*

*o A plenary indulgence removes all the temporal punishment due to sin (CCC, 1471).*

*Promotion and catechesis on these remedies during the absence of the sacrament of reconciliation can be a source of great consolation for all the faithful. A short catechesis on how the faithful can participate in both the indulgence and the act of perfect contrition will be coming shortly to the USCCB website [usccb.org](http://usccb.org).*

*For further reference, please see:*

*<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2020/03/20/200320d.html>*

*<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2020/03/20/200320c.html>*

Again, keep in mind, all these things may change with new Network Alerts from the Bishop and Executive Orders from the Governor. If you ever have questions or concerns, please call us at the parish office. If you would like to help out with lecturing (reading at Mass) or helping out with music or video recording, please call us at the parish office and we will get you scheduled. Reminder Palm Sunday and Holy Week begins next weekend. We will have more information on how we will celebrate Holy Week next weekend. Also, after the 10 am Mass next weekend, April 5<sup>th</sup>, we will have blessed palms in all of the churches. Feel free to stop by any of the churches and pick some up, and remember to say “Hi” to Jesus in prayer. Remember as we heard at the beginning of Lent, please pray, maybe do some fasting, and give alms. Our parishes and school need your offerings. As someone once said, “Don’t give until it hurts, give until it feels good.” Not only do we need your financial sacrifices, we need God in prayer. May God help us through this difficult time...JESUS, I TRUST IN YOU!!!