



March 18, 2020

Dear Friends,

As was announced by the Diocese of Davenport on Monday, March 16th, **all public celebrations of liturgies (Masses, Stations, Holy Hours) have been cancelled until further notice.** Bishop Zinkula has also asked **all diocesan schools and extra-curricular activities be cancelled until at least April 13th.** This decision was not taken lightly by our Bishop because he knows how many of us want to be together and celebrate the Sacraments, be in school, and continue our daily lives here in our community. I know that your lives have changed dramatically, and many of your lives will be changing even more dramatically as our country, state, and local community address this public health concern. I am sure that this announcement from our diocese will add to the changes in your life. However, the Bishop's decision is one that reflects one of our most important teachings of our Catholic Church--the dignity and sanctity of human life. Each of us is unique and special in the eyes of God, so any action that can be taken to protect each other must be considered, especially during these exceptional times. As many leaders in the Catholic Church have stated over the last couple of days, the Church is most profoundly present in its members, so one of the most important things we can do to protect the Church is to protect each other through the directives given to us by our Bishop. Any other effect caused by the Bishop's decision can be addressed after it is safe to come together again.

**Please know that the parish will communicate to everyone when liturgies will be able to resume.** We appreciate your patience as we reschedule events, address educational needs, and continue the work of faith formation. Our staff and volunteers will communicate the details of all of these changes to you. We will be communicating through video, email, and mail during the coming days and weeks. We are still going to foster community even though we cannot be together in our church or school for the time being.

**You and your family can still come to Church and pray** if you are well and have not had contact with anyone infected with COVID-19. This refuge is still available for you to use. We will keep it clean and safe. It will be open from 7:00AM to 8:00PM every day until further notice. There will be bulletins, containers of holy water, and other resources in the gathering space for you to take and use. I will also be offering confessions to individuals in the coming days: every Thursday 5:00pm-7:00pm, Saturday, 8:30am-10:00am, and then again on Saturday afternoon, 3:30pm-5:00pm. There will be a special area in the Church set-up to keep everyone safe during Confession, but please know that I can still hear your Confessions.

**Enclosed in this envelope is a list of resources** put together by our staff for you and your family to use to be connected with our faith community. There is also a larger list of resources found on the diocesan website ([www.davenportdiocese.org](http://www.davenportdiocese.org)) and on our website ([www.olvjfk.com](http://www.olvjfk.com)). Included in this packet is also a prayer sheet put together by the diocese for you to use since we will not be able to participate in the holy sacrifice of the Mass. If you want additional resources sent to you by the parish office, please simply call us at 563-391-4245. If you have not already please also sign up for our e-newsletter on our website.

Until further notice, **the parish office will have additional hours of operation during the week and on the weekend.** Our staff will be answering the phone from 7:30am until 6:00pm, Monday through Friday. We will also have volunteers operating the phone lines on Saturday and Sunday from 8:00am until 4:00pm. Please do not hesitate to call about anything.

I also know that there may be people who are in need of help during this difficult time. If you are above the age of 60 and/or have underlying health conditions, it is being recommended that you need to stay in your



home for the time being. **We have parishioners ready and willing to help you get the things you need in the coming days.** They will take all of the needed precautions to keep you and themselves safe during this stressful time. Please do not hesitate to reach out about anything.

There is much more to come from us, so please stay tuned.

I want to end on a personal note. When I am anxious or afraid in my life, I have constantly returned to Psalm 23. These six verses from Sacred Scripture, probably because my family raised sheep throughout my life, has always helped me to refocus my faith in times of trials and tribulations. Therefore, I reprint it so you might find some solace and consolation in this Psalm that has meant so much throughout my life.

The LORD is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I lack.  
In green pastures he makes me lie down;  
to still waters he leads me;  
he restores my soul.  
He guides me along right paths  
for the sake of his name.  
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;  
Your rod and your staff comfort me.  
You set a table before me  
in front of my enemies;  
You anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.  
Indeed, goodness and mercy will pursue me  
all the days of my life;  
I will dwell in the house of the LORD  
for endless days.

Please know of my personal prayers for all of you, and **please do not hesitate to reach out if you are in need.**

Our Lady of Victory, please pray for us!

Blessings,

Fr. Jake Greiner  
Pastor