

Frequently Asked Questions

about responding to COVID-19
as Catholics & members of Saint Mark parish

Week of March 22nd, 2020

Dear friends,

Even in these crazy days, I am happy to have this opportunity to reach out to you all again. These last couple of weeks have weighed heavily on us all as we have adapted our daily patterns to do our part to help slow the spread of the coronavirus. There have also been signs of great hope in the new ways we have more deliberately prayed together and for each other even while apart.

As you know, the governor's new order to stay home starts tonight. I want to add my voice alongside that of the archbishop in echoing the call for all people – especially those who are vulnerable – to stay home unless it is absolutely necessary to go out. Our efforts to 'flatten the curve' and reduce the spread of this virus are done not out of fear but care for our neighbors: we embrace these temporary measures as ways we can uphold to the well-being of our community.

Below are answers to some questions you may have about how we at Saint Mark parish are putting these measures into effect. In addition to being well-informed, let us together renew our commitment to prayer. Would that this time of unplanned retreat kindle our relationship with Jesus and each other in new and fruitful ways! And be assured of my continued prayers for you. I hope you will join me in prayer as Mass is live streamed on our Facebook page, in addition to your daily prayers as households and as members of the Body of Christ.

Yours in Christ,
Father Maurer

How does the [‘Stay Home, Stay Healthy’ proclamation](#) and the [archbishop’s letter](#) affect Saint Mark parish?

The governor's order obliges us to make changes to how we operate and minister. The primary changes are that our offices must be closed and that our church will not be open.

What does this mean for prayer at the church?

The archbishop desires that the faithful have access to churches in the archdiocese for private prayer. However, due to the strict requirements that must be followed when a church is open, we are unable to offer access at Saint Mark parish.

Will the Church be able to offer funerals, weddings, or baptisms?

The governor's order requires us to postpone all gatherings, including weddings, baptisms, and funerals. The only exception would be for a private baptism **when there is grave danger of death**. In such a case, please call the parish emergency line.

What about confession and anointing of the sick?

Foremost, recall that confession is always obligatory for mortal sins. If we only have venial sins, confession is not necessary – sincere contrition remits venial sins. Moreover, perfect contrition (sorrow for sin motivated solely by love of God rather than shame or fear of punishment) remits even mortal sins if it includes firm resolution to have recourse to sacramental confession as soon as possible. ([Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1452](#))

For those who have need of confession, I will be available for confession by appointment only. In order for me to do my part in this ‘Stay Home, Stay Healthy’ initiative, I ask that appointments only be made in serious need. These are the two numbers for pastoral care:

For confessions, please leave a message at my parish voicemail. **I am the only one who has access to this voicemail.** The parish number is (206) 364-7900 – **my extension is 101.** I will check voicemail regularly but there may be a delay in getting back to you. For anointing of the sick – **which should only be requested for serious illness involving danger of death** – please call the parish emergency line at **(425) 224-6042.**

Can our food bank still operate?

As such services have been deemed essential services by the governor, it can! Our Saint Vincent de Paul conference is having a drive by drop off of materials this Saturday (March 28) from 9am to 11am. You can also [donate to them online via our parish online giving site](#) – please also consider signing up for online giving. The full links are at the end of this document.

How are we going to celebrate Holy Week and Easter?

Although the governor’s decree has the ‘Stay Home, Stay Healthy’ order currently ending at midnight on Monday, April 6, 2020 (the Monday of Holy Week), it can be extended. While we hope for a swift resolution, we will be making contingency plans for the possibility that we will be unable to gather at that time. Holy Week and Easter celebrations will be live streamed on our Facebook page. We will publicize that schedule once it is finalized.

Will Masses still be live streamed?

Absolutely! Since I live with Father Altenhofen in the Immaculate Conception rectory in Everett, we will be adjusting our live stream schedule to accommodate the needs of our shared chapel. Starting Thursday, March 26 **all Masses will be live streamed at 10:00 am** (Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday).

What other opportunities will there be to stay in touch?

I’d like to encourage you to be active on [our parish Facebook page](#) – it has been heartening to see the fraternity of parishioners in the comments! I also invite you to join me [at Twitter on my personal account](#) or [at my personal blog](#).

I would also like to invite you to join me for a live Q&A on our parish Facebook page. I will be live at **noon on Saturday, March 28** – my hope is to answer questions, offer support, and be available to you even while we are apart. Please note: **you will need to be logged into Facebook in order to ask questions or comment during the live stream.**

Resources

Important COVID-19 information

- CDC (Center for Disease Control): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- Washington State Novel Coronavirus Fact Sheet (multilingual): <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/NovelCoronavirusOutbreak2020/FactSheet>
- Washington State Department of Health: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>
- News releases from Governor Jay Inslee: <https://www.governor.wa.gov/news-media/news-media>
- King County Public Health: <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/communicable-diseases/disease-control/novel-coronavirus.aspx>
- Snohomish County Health District: <https://www.snohd.org/484/Novel-Coronavirus-2019>

Parish & archdiocesan information

- Saint Mark Catholic Church: <http://saintmarkshoreline.org/>
 - o on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SaintMarkShoreline/>
 - o online giving: <https://www.osvonlinegiving.com/149/DirectDonate/2104>
- Saint Vincent de Paul: <https://saintmarkshoreline.org/parish-life/st-vincent-de-paul-of-seattle/>
 - o online giving: <https://www.osvonlinegiving.com/149/DirectDonate/2773>
- Saint Mark parish school: <https://www.stmss.org/>
 - o on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/stmarkschoolwa>
 - o on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/stmarkshoreline/>
- Archdiocese of Seattle: <http://www.seattlearchdiocese.org/>
- Archbishop Etienne: <https://www.archbishopetienne.com/>
 - o on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AbpEtienne>
 - o on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ArchbishopEtienne/>
- Father Maurer: <http://fathermaurer.com/>
 - o on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/fathermaurer>

Personal or family prayer

- Magnificat online - <https://us.magnificat.net/free>
- iBreviary (available online and via apps): <http://www.ibreviary.org/en/>
- Word Among Us: <https://wau.org/>
- Give Us This Day: <https://giveusthisday.org/>
- Formed (online Catholic videos): <https://formed.org>
 - o Free with our parish code: BREQZ9
- Sacred Heart Radio - <https://sacredheartradio.org/> - AM 1050/FM 100.3
- EWTN - <https://www.ewtn.com/tv/watch-live>
 - o Also included in some cable packages
- Archdiocesan 'Faith at Home' guide: <http://www.seattlearchdiocese.org/Assets/General/At-Home-with-Faith-Resource.pdf>

- ‘Thy Kingdom Come’ collection of prayers: <https://saintmarkshoreline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Thy-Kingdom-Come-Prayer-Book-Proof.pdf>
- Live streamed perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
 - o Dominican Monastery (Italy): <https://www.facebook.com/www.monasterodomenicane.org/videos/239153080573540/>
 - o Tyburn Convent (London): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WclRtNhMFPc>



Our Lady of Seattle, St. James Cathedral/Photo: Archbishop Paul D. Etienne

Holy Mary, we come before you as spiritual children in great need, seeking your intercession, and asking that your mantle of love surround us to console, protect, and lead us to your son Jesus.

We entrust all of God’s family, especially the church in Western Washington, into your immaculate hands. With your son Jesus’ gentle power you can *undo any knot* in our church, and in the lives of believers who entrust themselves to your care.

Today I especially entrust to you [*mention request/ Coronavirus here*], and I ask that — through your intercession, and that of St. James, our guardian angels, and the faithful in our archdiocese — we may be free from every spiritual and temporal ill, and be safely led to encounter your son’s merciful, sacred heart.

Our Lady of Seattle, Undoer of Knots, pray for us!