

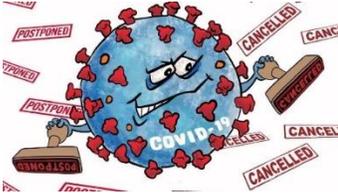
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Sent May 10, 2020

Special Newsletter

During the Coronavirus Quarantine



Update about St. Mary's School staying closed:



As a school in Idaho (with a childcare program), we are required to follow the guidelines of: Governor Little, State Board of Education, the Diocese of Boise and our insurance company, Catholic Mutual.

Presently, we are in *Stage One* (May 1-15) of the guidelines:

No more than 10 may gather
Social distancing of 6 feet

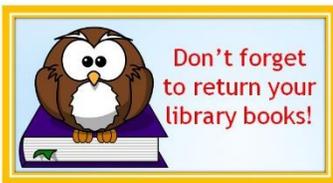
IF there are major occurrences of the virus as of May 16, we will be Entering *Stage Two* (May 16-29)

Same as Stage One



Special blessings on each mother, living or who has passed over, in deep gratitude for the gift of life each has given in so many ways daily!

NOTE: As plans go now, there will be Mass with Graduation following for our 8th graders. It is planned for **Sunday, May 31st at 1:00 p.m.** (note this is an extra Mass so that family and friends of the 8th graders may attend. Seating is still limited. (See Fr. Joe's note below).



Note about school's library books: you can return them any time between now and **May 19th**. Books may be dropped in the *drop off box* on the outside or the school office.



As we plan for the classes in the fall, please watch your emails for a Survey from the School/School Board requesting your responses to 7 questions. All responses are anonymous. Thank you!



Please keep in your prayers: This past week Carmella Helbling died after a long illness. Carmella was very active in the parish and school. Bill, her husband preceded her in death. All their five children are alums of the school as was her husband. Burial is private; there will be a memorial Mass later.

*A huge THANK YOU to the 25 donors who gave recently to our St. Mary's School Foundation through Idaho Gives Campaign. To date: \$1965.00 was raised. ****

We are very grateful to each and everyone who gave.

The school's Foundation was established in 1982 to support the students' education by providing monies to the school's yearly budget (5% of the interest earned from its Endowment). Monies are used to provide scholarships, as well as equipment and programs to enhance the educational experience of every student from Preschool through 8th Grade. Monies donated are put in the Endowment's corpus and *only the interest earned* is used to promote the mission of keeping Catholic education affordable.

****If you, or your friends would like to give, they can do so directly to 412 North Monroe c/f of St. Mary's School Foundation. Idaho Gives finished as of May 8, 2020.*



A Word from Father Joe

As I am in contact with my brother priests and men and women religious throughout the diocese the main topic of discussion is the reopening of our churches.

Mass Times -- We here at St. Mary's in Genesee and Moscow have been blessed with the extra space afforded us in the St. Mary's School Gymnasium. Following all recommended safety protocols, we should be able to accommodate all parishioners if we spread out our attendance over the three masses scheduled for Saturday evening at 5:00 p.m. and Sunday morning at 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. The daily mass schedule is Tuesday through Friday at 8:00 a.m. at the main St. Mary's Church in Moscow.

Around the Diocese -- Even the largest churches in our diocese have not been able to accommodate all of their parishioners. Our Cathedral has limited all masses to 100 individual/family spaces per mass. Holy Apostles in Meridian will not fully open until August 20, 2020. Until then, they will not have mass on Sundays, but parishioners can drive by to receive Holy Communion. Attendance at daily mass begins June 15, 2020 by pre-registration only.

Entrance to Masses at St. John Paul II in Idaho Falls is by reservation only. They have two large churches which together accommodate about 400 people. However, adherence to social distancing protocols limits their capacity to 90 individual/family spaces per mass. St. Mark's in Boise seats 1200, but is limited to 150 individual/family spaces per mass and tickets are required. At Holy Spirit Catholic Community in Pocatello, parishioners must arrive 30 minutes before mass and wait in their cars to be escorted to a white tent where they will be screened and their temperatures taken.

Seating Capacity -- At St. Mary's in Genesee and St. Mary's in Moscow, we also find that our space is limited at each church. Using CDC, state and diocesan regulations for social distancing protocols, St. Mary's in

Genesee is limited to 32 individual/family spaces in the pews and one family in the choir loft. St. Mary's in Moscow is limited to 83 individual/family spaces which includes the use of the choir loft and family room. The St. Mary's School gym can accommodate approximately 110 individual/family spaces.

Both parishes will continue the use of the gymnasium until at least the celebration of Pentecost, May 31st. During the week of June 1st through 5th our Pastoral Staff and I will evaluate our experience during the month of May and decide what we will do for the future. It is important to note, based on facts and data as well as guidance from our Bishop and civil authorities, things might not change right away.

Cleaning and Sanitization -- Every church in the diocese is required to clean and sanitize all surfaces after each mass. Our Gym is being sanitized by a special crew using EPA approved sanitizers. This includes all chairs, and surfaces, door handles and rails, the restrooms in the gym and any other high contact surfaces.

Using EPA approved cleaners and wipes, our main church receives a "heavy cleaning" on Monday, Wednesday and Friday including the restrooms. On Tuesday and Thursday, a lighter, *but still thorough*, sanitization is done.

Is this necessary? -- Some people have asked if all this social distancing and cleaning is necessary. The answer is "YES!" As a Catholic Christian people, we believe we must respect life at all stages. During these uncertain and difficult times, to "respect life" means to care for the health of others as well as our own. What we do or don't do always affects those around us.

Do I have to attend Mass? -- In order to care for the most vulnerable among us: *"The bishop will maintain the dispensation of the obligation to attend Mass for those 60 and older; those who are immunocompromised or otherwise vulnerable; and all those who have judged it prudent for their health and safety to remain home. This dispensation remains in place until we reach the final phase of the governor's directive (as of today, that date is June 26th)." (Bishop's letter 4/24/2020)*

Personal hygiene and social distancing -- Please remember that our parish depends on you to help maintain a safe and healthy atmosphere. So, follow the current, and by now, well known protocols *before* you come to Mass:

1) If you or any member of your family is sick please **stay home**.

Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions should stay home.

It is best that children who are unable to follow social distancing protocols with other parishioners around them or who cannot sit through an entire Mass should also stay at home with their parents.

2) **Please wear a mask and wash and sanitize your hands before coming to mass.**

3) Use a hand sanitizer and cover all surfaces of your hands.

4) Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

5) Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.

6) Everyone should wear a cloth face cover when they have to go out in public. Remember, the cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.

The Pastoral Team and I are grateful to all of you for your patience and flexibility. Let's place our hope and trust in the Risen Lord as He helps us navigate these new and difficult times in our church and society.

Stay Safe!

Fr. Joe

IGNITING *faith, knowledge, creativity, and service*