



Dear Parish Family,

Today, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Annunciation of Our Lord. When the Archangel Gabriel appeared to young Mary, he said, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God." These same words of encouragement hold true for all of us who reach out to God whenever we are troubled. Even when we question what this all means and how will it all end, it is God's grace acting within us to say with Mary, "May it be done to me according to your word."

With this holy truth in mind, here's where things stand as of today at St. Monica.

In light of Governor Inslee's most recent mandate to shelter in place, Archbishop Etienne has issued further cautionary directives for parishes which we are carrying out while carrying on to the best of our abilities. The good news is Jesus is still not under quarantine! However, we have had to change our church visiting hours and guidelines effective immediately for your safety.

Visiting Hours:

Sunday, 8am to 1pm (The Day of Jesus' Resurrection from the dead!)

Monday – Friday, 8am to 6pm (not 8pm so as to better utilize our custodial staff)

Saturday, CLOSED (Think of this as Holy Saturday when the body of Jesus lay enclosed in the tomb)

Visiting Guidelines:

1. If you or a family member are unwell or vulnerable to CoVID-19, please, please, please do not enter the church.
2. ALL VISITORS must gel-in and gel-out at one of the 4 Purell stations inside.
3. Maintain a minimum social distance of 6ft. and do not enter the Sanctuary for any reason.
4. Restrooms are out-of-service. Our custodial staff simply cannot service them after every use.
5. There are no more scheduled times for Confession until the shelter in place mandate is lifted. However, the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick are available upon request. Please call (do not text) 206-701-9553 and leave a message requesting an appointment with me.

Our custodial staff will be onsite and disinfecting the church during these open hours. But they need your help! First, respect and abide by the guidelines above as though lives depend on it because they do. Second, if you have disinfecting towelettes (e.g., Clorox), please bring them and use them to wipe down the pew areas you happen to touch during your visit. You may then dispose of your used towelettes in

the garage can at the back of the church. Please do not leave them or anything else in the pews or vestibule. It may be God's House but, just like in any family, we, God's children, have chores to keep the House clean!

For those who want to visit with Jesus but fall under the first category in our guidelines above, I have good news for you! Our facilities manager, Terry Callahan, has installed our new streaming camera in the church. Michael Peters, our Director for Evangelization and Faith Formation, is now working diligently with our tech providers to have it operational for you asap. So watch for an email from us with instructions when it becomes fully functional.

These are unquestionably difficult times for everyone, especially the vulnerable. Only if everyone does even a little more than just their part to help keep all of us safe and well, then we do it for Jesus. Even if you are feeling particularly challenged, I invite you to offer it up for your Lenten sacrificial penance. God's offering of grace to us is limited only by our openness to receiving it, regardless of where we are or what we are doing. And so, I can confidently repeat these consoling words of St. Padre Pio to you:

Pray, Hope, and Don't Worry!

Faithfully yours,

Fr. Freitag

Pastor

P.S. Please continue your generous support of St. Monica with an online donation at www.StMonicaMI.org. Just click on the 'Sacrificial Giving' tab near the top for options. Thank you.