

March 20, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

We are probably entering into the worst phase of the coronavirus pandemic. As I write this, there are 31 cases in Prince George's County. The first death from this virus happened here in Prince George's. Yesterday, Governor Hogan issued an order banning all grouping of ten people or more.

Because of this, I am writing this letter. It has been a week since I wrote to you. It seems like a month! We need to take even stronger measures than the one's I outlined in my letter a week ago:

- The Archdiocese has directed that Holy Communion not be distributed.
- We will no longer have Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament as that devotion attracts more than ten people.
- Stations of the Cross booklets will be left on the bookcase for anyone wishing to pray this devotion. Please do not take them with you. You can also find Stations of the Cross online at <https://www.catholic.org/prayers/station.php> or <https://mycatholic.life/catholic-prayers/stations-of-the-cross/>
- The Church will open every day from 7:00 am to 9:00 pm. But, we urge that if ten people are in the Church that you wait outside or in your car for someone to exit before you go in.
- If you visit the Church, please keep a distance of at least six feet between yourself and other people.
- If you wish to keep up with the daily and Sunday Mass readings, go to <http://www.usccb.org/bible/>

- You can watch the Mass on television on EWTN. Here is a link to online Masses: <http://adw.org/live-streamed-masses-and-prayers>; or on Sunday at 10:30am on WDCW-50: No cable; Dish or DIRECTV subscribers: Ch. 50 Comcast: Ch. 23 in Washington, DC and Montgomery County; Ch. 3 in Prince George's County and Southern Maryland RCN: Ch 15; Verizon: Ch. 3. There are also Masses on YouTube.
- Confession times are cancelled. However, if you need to go to Confession, contact me and we will make arrangements to hear your confession. We could meet on the patio behind the rectory or I could come to your car.
- Anointing of the Sick: I can offer this sacrament to anyone who is sick other than with the coronavirus. We will have a priest designated in the area who will be dedicated to offering this sacrament to coronavirus sufferers. In any event, contact me.

Please continue your contributions to the parish if you have the means, by

- Using Faith Direct;
- Mailing or dropping them off at the parish office, using the mail slot on the office door.

The Parish offices will be closed beginning 5:00 pm Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup> until further notice. If you need anything, please contact me directly at my cell phone: **301-452-7820** or e-mail: [tlahood@stmaryum.org](mailto:tlahood@stmaryum.org). Please put off any routine business until after the crisis passes. I will be on the parish property. I am over 60 myself, so I am limiting my contact with other people.

**Beware of scammers.** I have already had one person call me because she received an e-mail supposedly from me. I will only send e-mails to give you information. I will not request any kind of emergency action on your part. Do not click on any links from an e-mail without checking on its validity. E-mails from me or the parish will end in “stmaryum.org.”

We will suspend publication of the parish bulletin.

If you are in need, we have parishioners who have volunteered to help. We have volunteers who will go grocery shopping for you. Please contact me as above.

I will continue to offer private Masses for the Mass intentions already scheduled.

For more information:

- Please continue to check our website  
<http://stmaryum.org/parish/#>;
- For information from the Archdiocese go to the Catholic Standard website: <https://cathstan.org/>
- We will send out e-mails to parishioners from time to time to keep you updated. If you have not received an e-mail from the parish, please send an e-mail to the parish [Parish@stmaryum.org] and request that your e-mail address be added to our mailing list.

As we isolate ourselves to prevent the spread of this pandemic, we do not want to isolate ourselves spiritually. Please keep up or increase your prayer time. With God’s help and Our

Lady's Protection we can soon resume our normal lives in good health.

God Bless you all, Fr. LaHood

Again, my contact information is

**Cellphone: 301-452-7820**

**E-mail: tlahood@stmaryum.org**