

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

March 20, 2020

After further prayerful consideration; and after no small amount of sadness; and after hearing from senior pastors and others about the need for a single directive for the entire Archdiocese; and in keeping with the regulations of the other Dioceses of British Columbia; I direct that all Masses, whether Sunday or weekday, beginning on Saturday, March 21, are to be offered without a public congregation, until further notice. This likewise applies to other parish activities and celebrations, such as Stations of the Cross, and so on.

Consequently, all the faithful are dispensed, for the time being, from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass.

As Holy Mass commemorates Christ's sacrificial act of love for us, this unprecedented decision was not taken lightly. It follows from the Lord's commandment that we love one another as he has loved us (cf. Jn 13:34). In this trying time, this means that we must ensure the health and safety of our community by following the directives of our provincial and national health authorities.

Recognizing the great sacrifice involved for those who are unable to receive the Eucharist, particularly during this time of suffering, I invite all the faithful to deepen their relationship to the Lord by uniting themselves to his Passion.

Wherever possible – that is, whenever the health and safety of the community can be scrupulously attended to – churches may remain open for private prayer and Adoration. However, for the good of the wider community, seniors or those who have serious medical conditions are strongly urged to remain at home and pray to the Father in secret (cf. Mt 6:6).

Further communications about continuing to meet the spiritual needs of the faithful will be forthcoming.

This directive supersedes previous measures taken in regard to the celebration of Mass during the Covid-19 pandemic.

With the assurance of my prayers for you and your families, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ J. Michael Miller, CSB
Archbishop of Vancouver