



DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG
Office of the Bishop

March 31, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We are living through a difficult time. Many of you have concerns about health, finances, family and even your faith. I know, from the depths of my heart, how difficult it is for you to be separated from the Holy Eucharist, the source and summit of our faith. That's why I know it's hard to imagine a Holy Week and an Easter celebration without going to Church and gathering for the celebration of Mass. Yet, this is the reality we are facing.

I have provided guidance to our priests on how to observe Holy Week and Easter during this time in which public Masses are suspended for the safety and well-being of our community. They will do what they can, in light of their constraints, to share this Holy Week and Easter with you.

It's important to stay connected with your local parish by phone, through their website, social media sites, by email or app, to find out the latest information. They will inform you of opportunities that are available to experience these Holy Days with reverence, joy and prayer.

I encourage you and your family to view the Mass online – either your local parish celebration or – if that is not possible – the Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle will live stream all of the Holy Week liturgies, including the Chrism Mass. Visit www.CatholicMassOnline.org to learn more about Mass schedules and other details.

The diocesan website, www.dosp.org/coronavirus/keepfaithalive offers suggestions for living the faith at home with your loved ones and ideas for celebrating Holy Week and Easter at home.

I also have a special message for those of you who have been preparing to enter the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil. I have granted permission to our pastors to delay the celebration of the three Sacraments of Initiation to another time outside of the Easter Vigil. May you keep close to Christ during this time of preparation and trust that God's plan for you will be fulfilled!

I commit to keeping all of you informed as updates develop. Please know that you are all in my prayers each day. In your kindness, I also humbly ask for your prayers.

May God bless you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

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Most Reverend Gregory Parkes
Bishop of St. Petersburg