



REV. P. CÉSAR CAYETANO ARRAS, C.R. THEAT.
ST. IGNATIUS PARISH
ST. BARTHOLOMEW CHURCH - ST. PETER AND ST. ROSE CHURCH
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COVID-19 Emergency: Provisions of St. Ignatius Parish

March 17th, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Be not afraid, the Lord is with us!

The Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Colorado have announced that all public worship is suspended until further notice due to the spread of *coronavirus (COVID-19)*. Sadly, this includes the celebration of the Most Holy Eucharist, the center of our Christian life. Our parish office will remain open. However, other group activities such as: Stations of the Cross, Adult Formation, Catechism, Choir Practice and Confraternities are suspended. We are faced with a sudden situation, a kind of “*quarantine*”, that seems to overlap with our Lenten journey, the 40 days of preparation to Easter. This challenging situation should be viewed through the Lookingglass of our *Catholic Faith*, entrusting ourselves, our families and our community, to our Lord who is “*Physician of souls and bodies*”. The limitations which we are experiencing in our pastoral and liturgical life are necessary to limit the spread of this virus for the defense of public health. These restrictions should not be a cause of fear or anxiety.

Our inability to gather to celebrate liturgically our Faith, can neither prevent us from deepening our relationship with God, nor weaken our sense of being the Church, by partaking “*the joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted*”, (*Gaudium et Spes I*). It is in this spirit, we are invited to continue our Lenten journey, reinforced with the three pillars of this liturgical season: *Prayer, Sacrifice and Almsgiving*. Though for a time we will be missing some essential expressions of our faith and identity as Catholics we should not despair. Nevertheless we should deepen our understanding of being a “*Domestic Church*”, by pondering the words of St. John Chrysostom “*make your home a little church*”. Give thanks to the Lord our God and Congregate as a family, now and after this emergency has passed. Our liturgical life as a parish will resume as soon as all this has passed. Take advantage of the many resources we have at hand to assist us in our spiritual life: Holy Scripture, daily meditation, the rosary, and family devotions; the special programs on the tv, radio, and the internet.

As we continue this journey let us go forward with trust and faith. Let us live the upcoming days as a time of purification and prayer gathered as families. Let us enter into this unusual Lenten experience allowing it to help us come closer to our Heavenly Father and one another. Therefore, strengthening our celebration of Easter, the Resurrection of Christ. Let us invoke as a parish the intercession and protection of Our Lady of Health, Blessed Mary of Guadalupe, by praying for those that are sick and lonely, our families, and all health care workers.

Ignacio, Colorado, March 17, 2020

From the bottom of my heart, I bless you and pray for you,

Rev. Fr. César Cayetano, CR. Theat.

P.S. Please, check our parish’s website for accurate updates (www.stignatiuschurch-ignacio.com). Mindful of the spiritual needs of the faithful within St. Ignatius Parish, I will join Fr. Novack from St. Columba for the celebration of Sunday mass on your behalf. I invite you to check St. Columba’s social media and website for Sunday mass attendance (www.stcolumbacatholic.org). I will continue to be available for the Sacraments of Confession and Anointing of the Sick. In case of an emergency, please call the office 970.563.4241 or the rectory 970.563.3165.