

April 9, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

I have done a poor job in communicating to you the implications of the many decisions made by civil and Church authorities concerning the Church's liturgy and the Covid-19 virus. I will try to be more specific:

- On March 17<sup>th</sup>, Bishop Robert Baker suspended all public liturgies in the Diocese of Birmingham through April 3, 2020. On March 27<sup>th</sup>, the Bishop extended that suspension through April 17, 2020.
- On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Alabama Governor Kay Ivey issued a Stay-at-Home Order for the State of Alabama from 5:00 p.m. April 4<sup>th</sup> through April 30, 2020. Indoor religious services are allowed if there are fewer than 10 people who can maintain a six-foot distance from each other.

As the result of these two orders:

- A private Mass is allowed as long as there are fewer than 10 people in attendance who can maintain a six-foot distance from each other.
- Group Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction, Stations of the Cross, Divine Mercy Celebrations, Weddings, Funerals, and other public liturgies held on the property of Our Lady of the Lake church, parish hall, religious education building and any other parish buildings and property are suspended through April 17<sup>th</sup>. These would qualify as public liturgies.
- Because there are no public liturgies, there is no need for liturgical ministers. This would include Lectors, Ministers of Holy Communion, Ushers, Greeters, Altar Servers, and any other lay liturgical ministers.

- The liturgies for Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday will be videoed and posted on the Our Lady of the Lake Facebook page and You Tube. The link is available on the parish web site. Until the suspension of public masses is lifted, the Mass for Sunday will be videoed and posted in the same manner.
- In a letter mailed to all registered parishioners on March 18<sup>th</sup> and posted on the parish web site, it was stated that the church building is open every day from 9:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. for private prayer, as long as there are fewer than 10 people who can maintain a six-foot distance from each other.
- The deacons and I are available to distribute communion to individuals by appointment either in the church building or at the individual's home. (I am in the parish office every day.)
- I am available for confession for individuals by appointment, either in the parish hall or the individual's home. (I am in the parish office every day.)
- I am available for the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick for individuals by appointment, either at the church or at the individual's home. By state law, a priest is only allowed to visit someone in a hospital or nursing home if death is immanent.

Every day things are changing. I will try to keep up and inform you of the changes.

Father Bill Lucas