

Saint Charles Borromeo Catholic Church COVID-19 Communication

March 17, 2020

Dear St. Charles Borromeo Parishioners,

We are in unprecedented times in the midst of a world-wide viral pandemic. Drastic and immediate changes in our social contact and behaviors are paramount to blunt the spread of the highly contagious COVID-19.

Our bishop, Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout, has announced the following diocese cancelations in response to our public health emergency:

- **All public Masses cancelled**
- **CCD classes and first sacrament ceremonies cancelled**
- **Communion to those at home or hospital suspended**, unless someone is near death
- **Parish volunteer sick and nursing home visits are suspended**
- **Reconciliation sacrament by appointment**, contact Rectory at 757-331-1724

Our church will be open during daylight hours every day for private prayer and meditation. Please maintain safe social distance of six feet of open space between yourself and others when in church.

Parish Office hours will be restricted. If someone is planning on coming by, please call first. Most business can be conducted over the phone or email.

During this period, **we are planning to use email communications as the primary method to keep parishioners informed about what's going on in our parish** and the diocese. It will be our 'electronic parish bulletin'. Email is both faster and less costly than regular document mailings. How often we will share information to the parish via emails is still evolving. However, we need your current email address, if you want to stay in the parish communications loop.

Our office manager, Irene Henderson, has many current emails of parishioners but not everyone's. If you're not sure we have your current email address, please send Irene an email at saintcharles545@gmail.com with your name and email address. Given everything happening now, it will be everyone's responsibility to make sure Irene has a good email on file. An effort will be made to post brief update information on the parish website and phone answering machines as well but the emails will be your better information source.

During this extended suspension of public Masses, we will continue to rely our parishioners' generous financial support. **Our weekly Offertory budget is about \$3,000.** Offertory donations cover our parish operational expenses. Unfortunately, we are a smaller, frugal parish, where our donations essentially cover our parish expenses. **Our core parish expenses run about \$2,925 a week** (i.e., our payroll &

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benefits, facilities operations & upkeep, energy, insurance and diocese charges). Collectively, these expenses must be paid monthly, despite our church closing.

I am humbly requesting all parishioners please continue making their regular church donations. There are a couple of ways to continue making your offertory and monthly Preservation Fund donations:

1. Mail your donation checks to St. Charles Parish; 545 Randolph Ave.; Cape Charles, VA 23310. Please indicate in the check's memo section if it's OFFERTORY or PRESERVATION FUND. You can send one check with your monthly Offertory donation, or one weekly, or four weekly checks with three post-dated in one mailing envelope.
2. Set up a recurring debit payment- one for Offertory and another for Preservation Fund--at your local bank through your checking or savings account. This option is more convenient, once you set it up, because it makes your donations automatically. (There is a 'check image' for each debit payment provided at many banks for your records.)

Continuing your financial support during these challenging times is both greatly appreciated and urgently needed!

During this extended period of social isolation, we all have an opportunity to forge a deeper relationship and faith with our God. **Private prayer and meditation can strengthen our faith, trust and unconditional love of God.** Please be careful and vigilant in your daily lives.

May Our Lord and God bless and protect everyone.

Father Michael