



DIOCESE OF ST. CATHARINES

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THE CHANCERY

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MEMO

To: All Pastors/Parishes in the Diocese of St. Catharines

From: Most Reverend Gerard Bergie

Date: March 23, 2020

Re: COVID-19

As we continue to deal with a situation that is still unfolding, and wait for the full force of the Coronavirus to hit us, I wish to assure you of my prayers and fraternal greetings. We must remain united in prayer with Our Lord, each other, and our parishioners.

In order to err on the side of extreme caution, I have decided **to cancel** the Confessions that have been scheduled across our diocese for Saturday, March 28th. I ask that you post this on your parish websites and on the doors of the Church.

Please continue to think of ways to stay connected to your people, always respecting existing health care protocols. Some of our pastors have been very creative and I encourage others to be resourceful when thinking of ways to reach out to your parishioners.

During this very stressful time, it is important that our people do not feel abandoned by the Church and that they know that if we cannot be with them physically we are united to them spiritually.

I have included, for your information, a Bulletin form the Apostolic Penitentiary in Rome regarding special indulgences for those suffering from COVID-19, as well as health care workers, family members and all those who care for them. You will also find a Decree from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments regarding the celebration of Holy Week liturgies without a congregation.

I assure you of my continued prayers during these dark days. The Sunday Readings from yesterday remind us that our focus should always be light – Jesus Christ who is the Light of the world!

May God bless you.

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