



March 16, 2020

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Peace and all good things!

As we continue to monitor the coronavirus pandemic, the Center of Disease Control has issued a directive to limit to number of people who can gather in one place at the same time to 50. As a result of this strong recommendation and in collaboration with the Archdiocese of Atlanta, there are to be no public Masses celebrated in the parish churches or missions in the diocese of Savannah beginning immediately. This also includes the celebration of Confirmation. Confirmation should be re-scheduled according to the parish calendar. Please notify the bishop's office to see who will officiate. Weddings and funerals should be limited to family members only.

Please communicate to your parishioners that there will be a live streamed Mass from the Cathedral on Sundays at 10 AM. Television and online Masses may be viewed on EWTN.

Our senior priests and those with compromised immune systems should self-quarantine until it is safer to leave the rectory or your home.

We recommend that we keep our churches and missions open, if possible, for private prayer and personal devotions.

It would be wise to ask the lay faithful to continue to support their parish church through on-line giving or by mail.

Please remind your parishioners to notify you by using the emergency phone number in case there is a need for the Anointing of the Sick, Last Rites or if there is a death.

We will review this protocol on April 1st and determine whether Palm Sunday and Holy Week services will be open to the public.

These may seem to be drastic measures; however, we are dealing with a deadly virus. Personally and as a parish community, please continue to pray for an end of this serous health emergency.

Please make this information known to our parishioners, places of worship and outreach as soon as possible. Our Lady of Perpetual Help, pray for us.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

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Most Reverend Gregory J. Hartmayer, OFM Conv.

Bishop of Savannah