

Feast of St Benedict  
March 21, 2020

Dear Faithful of Our Lady of Fatima Chapel,

First and foremost, on behalf of Frs. Power and Boyd, I would like to send warmest greetings to you all and assure you of the daily prayers of your priests for all your intentions!

Please know how much we miss the opportunity to share the great liturgical richness of this Lenten season with you, the beauty of our usual public and communal acts of devotion during this time, and most of all our regular public sacramental schedule.

Every Father worthy of the name desires rather to be more present for his children than less. I can assure you that it is no different for your priests/'spiritual fathers' here at OLF.

Nevertheless, due to the directives from our Bishop during this time, I hope some practical points of notification and clarification for Sunday will be useful:

**SUNDAY:**

- ✠ **Sundays and Holy Days: all faithful are dispensed from their obligation** to attend Holy Mass. This dispensation will continue on all Sundays and Holy Days, at least until the suspension of public masses is no longer in effect.
- ✠ The **priests will be offering private masses** for the posted intentions at **7AM** (*Mass intention from the 5PM Sunday Mass*), **9AM**, and **11AM**,
- ✠ Private masses will **not** be offered at the main altar in the Chapel. (We have been asked to keep to the recommended 'social distancing' guidelines. I know how many would love to even attend a private mass. We are sorry that this is not possible at the moment.)
- ✠ **Church Open Daily: 6AM-8PM**
- ✠ **Sundays: Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament** from **1PM-6PM**.

So how does one, whether as an individual or family, make holy the Lord's Day when unable to attend Sunday mass?

**Your priests would like to encourage each of you to do at least the following, to the best of your ability:**

- ✠ Choose one of the times when we will be offering private mass(7AM, 9AM, or 11AM) and unite yourselves very specifically to the Holy Sacrifice being offered at that time.
- ✠ At the time of your choosing, depending on the practicalities of age, attention span, etc, persons and/or families could read and pray the mass Propers from the Fourth Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday). The prayers common to every mass are also a beautiful way to unite yourselves spiritually to the mass being offered here at OLFC, your spiritual home.
- ✠ An Act of Contrition, an Act of Spiritual Communion, and the Rosary, should also be a part of this Sunday Spiritual Exercise.

The above will likely take less than an hour and we hope that most individuals and families should reasonably be able to do at least this. Other things that could be included either at that time or at some other time during the Sunday are:

- ✠ Watch a live or recorded mass from one of the Churches that broadcast on livemass.net. I have found Fr. de Malleray's homilies from Warrington to be very good!
- ✠ The Chaplet of Divine Mercy
- ✠ A favorite Litany: especially the litany of the Saints, of Our Lady or the Sacred Heart.
- ✠ Adoration- we will be having Adoration here at OLF on Sunday 1PM-6PM. However, we will need to be rather strict on the 10 persons at a time in the Church. So for anyone who has a church with adoration near them, we encourage you to visit Him there. Those who do come to OLF, please be aware that there may be others waiting to get in, and you may have to wait as well. Again, our apologies, but the Bishop has been clear that we must follow the guidelines.

### **CONFESSIONS:**

Given the current restrictions, we are not able to have confessions scheduled as usual in the confessional. However, Bishop Serratelli was clear in his letter, "Priests should administer the Sacrament of Penance or the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick to the Christian faithful who legitimately request those sacraments." Your priests are more than happy to hear your confession! However, at this time they can be by appointment only. It might be a good time to remind one and all that the Church only makes confessing our sins absolutely necessary once a year and that confessions of devotion (no certain grave sin) have often in the past been customary once a month or every two months. The best thing to do if you cannot visit a priest is to make a good examination of conscience before a Crucifix and tell God that you detest each of these sins and want to love Him alone.

**Finally**, I would like to call again to mind the idea that I mentioned in an earlier letter: 'This is the Lent He has prepared for us'. It is no doubt a great sacrifice to be deprived of Holy Mass and the sacramental reception of Holy Communion. But every great sacrifice has a potential great grace attached to it, if we are open to His work in us, if we unite our sacrifice to His. So please make every attempt to carve out a time Sunday morning to unite your prayers and sacrifices to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the Unbloody Re-presentation of His Sacrifice on Calvary.

May Our Dear Lord and His Blessed Mother keep you safe and in the Peace of their Hearts!

Oremus pro Invicem,

Fr. McNeely

P.S. Bishop Athanasius Schneider wrote a beautiful piece recently which can be found [HERE](#). He encourages Catholics to see the circumstances in which we find ourselves at this moment as the open door to graces that Divine Providence has planned from all eternity to give. I would highly recommend reading the piece in its entirety.

I have copied His Excellency's words in part on the following page:

*"In spite of the painful situation of being deprived of Holy Mass and Holy Communion, Catholics should not yield to frustration or melancholy. They should accept this trial as an occasion of abundant graces, which Divine Providence has prepared for them. Many Catholics have now in some way the chance to experience the situation of the catacombs, of the underground Church. One can hope that such a situation will produce the new spiritual fruits of confessors of faith and of holiness.*

*Catholics who are now deprived of assisting at Holy Mass and receiving sacramentally Holy Communion, perhaps only for a short time of some weeks or months, may think about these times of persecution, where faithful for years couldn't assist at Holy Mass and receive other sacraments, as was the case, for instance, during the communist persecution in many places of the Soviet Empire.*

*Let the following words of God strengthen all Catholics who are currently suffering from being deprived of the Holy Mass and Holy Communion:*

*"Do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed." (1 Peter 4: 12–13)*

*"The Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God." (2 Cor. 1:3–4)*

*"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:6–7).*

*Bishop Athanasius Schneider*