



# Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

*A ministry of the Order of the BVM of Mercy – Mercedarian Friars*

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March 18, 2020

Dear parishioners,

As you know the Archdiocese has suspended the public celebration of Mass until further notice. This decision, I assure you, was not done in haste or without dialogue concerning its impact on the lives of the faithful and our communities. It is the concern and responsibility of the Archbishop and the Archdiocese to put the health and wellbeing of our faithful first. I would like to share with you how we at Our Lady of Lourdes are dealing with these temporary changes.

- The celebration of Mass, Monday through Saturday, will be privately celebrated by me and the Brothers in our rectory chapel, thus fulfilling those intentions given to us. On Sunday we will Live-Stream two Masses: 9:30 am in Latin and 11:30 am in English on our Facebook page, 'Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, Philadelphia.'
- Our Lady of Lourdes Church building will be open for adoration of the Eucharist every day of the week at the following times: Monday to Saturday from 9:00 am to 7:00 pm and on Sunday from 12:30 to 8:00 pm. We will continue to have Stations of the Cross on Friday evenings at 7:00 pm. The only door unlocked will be the handicapped door on the Lancaster Avenue side of the church. The Grotto chapel is closed until further notice.
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation (*confessions*) will continue every day: Monday to Friday from 6:00 – 7:00 pm and on Saturday and Sunday from 2:30 – 4:00 pm.
- All meetings and religious education classes, as well as parish youth group meetings, are cancelled until further notice. Nolasco Hall is not available for any use until the virus outbreak passes. Our parish offices will be closed to the public until further notice. Should you have need to contact us for anything, especially documents or certificates, please contact myself or Denise our parish secretary: Denise may be reached at 215-473-1669 or [parishsecretary@ourladylourdes.org](mailto:parishsecretary@ourladylourdes.org). You may reach Father Michael at: 585-474-3969 or [frmrock.oll@verizon.net](mailto:frmrock.oll@verizon.net).
- Funerals, weddings, and baptisms will continue to be celebrated on a case by case situation, knowing of course that attendance must be limited to no more than 50 people.

I understand that for many of you not being able to attend Mass and receive the Eucharist is devastating. Believe me, as a priest I cannot think of a situation that is more difficult. Nonetheless we must accept what needs to be done in order to safeguard the lives of each of you. That is why I invite and encourage you to watch the celebration of Mass on television or

via the internet. Read the scriptures for the day, offer prayers for the needs of those suffering. I invite you to please check the parish website for more information: [www.ourladyourdes.org](http://www.ourladyourdes.org). I also extend my deepest thanks and gratitude to those of you who have already begun to help us by sending in your Sunday envelopes. Even though we do not have the permission to allow you to attend the Mass in person we are still functioning as a parish and we have financial responsibilities to meet. Thank you for your help!

Concerning the St. Donato worship site; during this time the worship site is closed and cannot be used for Masses. As you may know it had been announced in the bulletin that our last scheduled Mass at the worship site would be Easter and then we were going to close it for use. I have decided that, after the restrictions due to the virus pass and Sunday Mass with public attendance is permitted again, we will use the St. Donato site for one month before closing it.

We are living through a historic and life changing event that has touched the entire world. For me, it offers a moment of sober reflection; despite all the power, technology, wealth, and material goods the world has –everything is in God’s hands and we cannot change anything but the way we think and live. I do not believe God sends this to us as a punishment, but he does permit events such as this to occur, to wake us up and offer us the opportunity to change the direction in which we live.

Let me also make it very clear that never, *never in Church history*, has anyone ever been expected to attend Mass if they were ill in any way. No one should feel obliged to put their life in danger and it is very important not to endanger others by coming to church or any public area if you are sick and may be a carrier of the virus. Let us pray for a swift end to the pandemic and the safety and wellbeing of all people. May God bless and protect us all.

With every best wish, I remain sincerely yours in n Christ.

*Rev. Michael Rock, Ode M.*

Rev. Michael R. Rock, O. de M.  
*Pastor*

