

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

MARCH 29, 2020

TO CELEBRATE MASS WITH FATHER MIKE,
CLICK ON THIS LINK:

<https://youtu.be/5kPk6VCyvqQ>

† MASS INTENTIONS †

Sat.	3/28	4:00 PM	Deceased Members of the Batcha and Ceriani Families by Joanne and Barbara
Sun.	3/29	11:00 AM	Angie Puzetti and Family by Michalene and Jim Eisenhart
Mon.	3/20	7:00 PM	Mary and Andrew Breznitsky by the Breznitsky Children
Tue.	3/31	7:00 AM	Francis Falatko by Mrs. Frances Breznitsky
Wed.	4/1	7:00 AM	Karenlynn Witchin by Carl Pecora
Thur.	4/2	7:00 AM	Kenneth Kopczynskie by His Mother Anna Marie and Family
Fri.	4/3	7:00 AM	Martin Makowiec by Dora Foderaro
Sat.	4/4	4:00 PM	Alex, Ann, and Thomas Zmiejko by John and Cheryl Zmiejko
Sun.	4/5	11:00 AM	Leonard Solarek by His Wife Carol and Daughter Bernadette

CANDLES ON THE ALTAR are in Memory of the Deceased Members of the Batcha and Ceriani Families by Joanne and Barbara.



SANCUARY LAMP is burning in Memory of the Very Reverend Maurice Rayr Cal and Deb Herring and Daughters.



STAY CONNECTED: If you provide your email address to the parish office at secretary@ourladyfreeland.org, we can email you any updates about masses that Father Mike is live streaming and other pertinent information.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT EASTER BOOKLETS: Every Easter we pass out a devotional book with our bulletins. Because there will be no public Easter services, we have arranged to get the books to you in one of two ways. They will be in the church, so if you stop in for a visit, you can pick one up. Also, the books are in digital form on the parish website www.ourladyfreeland.org. Simply go to the **Events** tab and click on the **Rejoice and Be Glad** and the entire book is at your fingertips. There is also a Spanish version right below it.



CHANGE OF PLAN!

Due to health and safety concerns, the hour of kindness **WILL NOT BE MEETING** on March 28th to address cards for the elderly and nursing home residents. Do not be discouraged. The cards will go out as scheduled. God, as always, has provided.

The deadline for the Forget-Me-Not gift bags has been extended indefinitely. We know it is hard to get out to fill the bags. We are looking to distribute them after Easter at the earliest. If you have your bag ready, the church is open **EVERYDAY from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM** for private prayer and visitation. You could leave it on the altar then.



Greetings My Fellow Parishioners,



No one would have guessed that a couple of week ago I would be standing in front of you via social media. Because of this world-wide epidemic, the life we were so comfortable with has been turned upside down. It is my opinion that we have gone from a physical ailment to a psychological impediment. Even if we are fortunate enough to not have succumbed to the virus, we are still affected by it.

Over the last week many have either emailed me, texted me or IM-ed me asking the question: WHY? The short answer is: I'm not sure myself. But looking back on the history of not only the church, but the world as well, we can be sure of this: this epidemic WILL come to an end. Have faith, you know it will.

All throughout history there have been plagues which infested our bodies and souls. Each and every one of us has had the opportunity to look back and say: I got through it! You Will Again.

I think it's interesting that this event has happened during the Holy Season of Lent. Just imagine Jesus in the desert with very little food and drink. Jesus needed to self-isolate so He could prepare Himself for His public ministry, something bigger. Maybe all of us need to self-isolate ourselves like Jesus did to strengthen our relationship with God. God has given us the precious gift of TIME. Focus on Him and it will be TIME well spent.

If you as a parishioner need anything, just call our offices. There is an option for a priest and the phone will ring directly to me. It says for emergency, but if you need something, to me that constitutes an emergency.

We are working on live-streaming masses and/or linking them to our webpages.

In a few months we will look back on this and ask ourselves how we got through it. Faith, hope and love, as scripture tells us, will get us through. Hang in there. We may feel like we are on the Cross now, but with every crucifixion Jesus promises a Resurrection. God Bless!
Fr. Mike



A VIEW FROM THE PEW, ANXIOUS?

The last few days I could not help reflecting on how people in days gone by must have felt when things weren't going well and their world was turned upside down... Past world wars, the depression & past pandemics. Today, we get a sense of the uneasiness the people who lived through such events must have felt. Unfortunately, pandemics close off the one thing that brought us together during trying times - church & the mass. Now we all get to experience what it is like to be a shut-in. Even though we lost our access to attend church we still can pray as a parish. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)



DIOCESE OF SCRANTON CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

March 23, 2020

This document reflects the most recent guidance from the Diocese of Scranton regarding the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and steps our communities can take to help prevent its spread. The Diocese of Scranton will be updating this guidance in accordance with recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Pennsylvania Department of Health and local public health officials.

PARISH OFFICES



IMPORTANT INFORMATION: In the interest of safety, the Bishop has directed that all parish offices remain in operation but are **NOT** open to the public. Our staff is still here to answer your questions and help whenever possible. Don't hesitate to reach out if you need us 570-636-3035

PARISH MASSES AND PUBLIC GATHERINGS SUSPENDED

Effective on Monday, March 16, 2020, and until further notice, Bishop Joseph C. Bambera announced the suspension of Masses open to the public and all public gatherings in all diocesan parishes, worship sites, college campuses, chapels and health care facilities in the eleven counties of the Diocese of Scranton.

Despite the suspension of all public Masses, churches will, however, remain open daily for individual private prayer. Immaculate Conception Church is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM and on Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

If an individual is sick, or shows symptoms of the coronavirus or flu-like symptoms, they are being urged to stay home and not visit a church during the opportunity for private prayer in an effort to protect their own well-being and that of others.

Scheduled sacramental celebrations, such as weddings, baptisms and funerals, will be permitted but attendance will be limited to immediate family members and follow any guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The sacraments of the Anointing of the Sick and Reconciliation will be available, when requested individually, by the faithful in cases of serious need.

Priests are still directed to celebrate Masses non-publicly on a daily basis for the good of the People of God, the Church and the intentions of the day.

All parish events, including fundraisers, dinners, etc. should be cancelled. Directives for the celebration of Holy Week and Easter will be forthcoming.

DIRECTIVES FROM THE APOSTOLIC PENITENTIARY OF THE HOLY SEE TO BE USED IN THE DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

PERFECT CONTRITION

With the increasing difficulty for individuals to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation due to the current health crisis, the faithful of the Diocese of Scranton are reminded that by having perfect contrition one can receive the forgiveness of sins, apart from going to confession.

Perfect contrition requires the following three things:

- A love of God above all else
- A sincere desire for the forgiveness from sin
- The resolution to go to confession as soon as possible when this health crisis subsides

PLENARY INDULGENCE

His Holiness, Pope Francis, has also granted a plenary indulgence under specific conditions.

The faithful who qualify for a plenary indulgence during the coronavirus pandemic:

- Those suffering from the coronavirus illness
- Health care workers, family members, and others caring for those with the coronavirus (exposing themselves to the virus)

The faithful must do at least one of the following:

- Unite yourself spiritually through the media in the celebration of the Holy Mass
- Recite the Rosary
- Pious practice of the Way of the Cross (or other forms of devotion)
- Recite the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and a Hail Mary

The faithful must be willing to perform all of the following as soon as possible: (considered the three usual conditions for a plenary indulgence)

- Going to Confession
- Receiving Holy Communion
- Praying for the intentions of Pope Francis

CONFESSION: At this time, if an individual contacts a priest to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, an appropriate distance (at least six feet) should be maintained between the penitent and confessor. An appropriate location in the Church or sacristy should be chosen (not a rectory or parish office). Care should be taken to disinfect the space following each confession.

PASTORAL CARE OF THE SICK: Prompted by many hospitals that have directed the suspension of individuals visiting patients, all Extraordinary Ministers of Communion must refrain from visiting hospitals and nursing homes until further notice. The sacrament should be offered on an individual basis. With any pastoral visits to the homebound, ministers of Communion, both ordinary and extraordinary, should practice meticulous hand washing. If the person being visited is ill with an infectious disease, he or she should be offered a mask. The minister may also wear a mask and, if necessary, gloves.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION & CONFIRMATION: It is highly likely that these celebrations will need to be postponed due to the cancellation of public Masses and Religious Education programs to a later date once the current health crisis has subsided.

WEDDINGS, BAPTISMS & FUNERALS: On Sunday, March 16, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control announced a recommendation that public events have no more than 50 people. Due to the rapidly changing nature of this situation, that number could certainly change. We encourage all pastors to make smart and prudent decisions in each individual circumstance and to use common sense and rely on the current guidance of national, state and local leaders. Social distancing and alternative row seating in pews is to be strongly advised.

In celebrating wedding and funeral Masses, all of the directives previously issued for the Celebration of Mass (eliminating the Sign of Peace, no offering the Precious Blood, etc.) must be applied.

CTV: CATHOLIC TELEVISION BROADCASTING DAILY MASSES

Despite the suspension of public Masses, a private Mass will be celebrated daily in the Cathedral of Saint Peter in Scranton, and made available on CTV: Catholic Television of the Diocese of Scranton. On weekdays, the Mass will be broadcast at 12:10 p.m., 3:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. On weekends, the Saturday Vigil Mass will be broadcast at 4:00 p.m. and rebroadcast on Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. The Masses will also be streamed on the Diocese of Scranton's website (www.dioceseofscranton.org), made available on the Diocese of Scranton's social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) and will be accessible on the Diocese of Scranton's YouTube channel.

PARISH LIVE STREAMING MASSES

Over the last weekend, nearly 50 parishes live-streamed one or more of their weekend services on social media. Offering online Masses (whether through your parish website or social media channels) provide opportunities for the faithful to remain connected in some way to the Sacrifice of the Mass during this difficult time. Parishes with the potential to broadcast their own Masses in this way should do so. The schedule of those live-stream or recorded Masses should be announced through email, parish websites or social media. Information about the link to accessing Immaculate Conception's celebration of the Mass will be updated in the weekly bulletin and also on the parish website www.ourladyfreeland.org

GENERAL PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS

The health and safety of our parishioners, staff, students, families and clients that we serve are of paramount interest to the Diocese of Scranton. While there is much to learn about the coronavirus, based on what is currently known about the virus, spread from person-to-person happens most frequently among close contacts (within about six feet). Current evidence suggests that the coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on surfaces made of a variety of materials.

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus a pandemic, because of its severity and the rapid rates at which it has spread. However, the WHO stressed that deliberate preventative actions can stop the virus from spreading. We ask that all members of our parishes, schools and human/social service agencies assist with the prevention of spreading viruses by following the following recommendations:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.