



# REVEREND DANIEL B. CARSON

## VICAR GENERAL AND MODERATOR OF THE CURIA

Dear Brother Priest,

I write today to share a letter to you from Archbishop Gregory linked [here](#) and to provide you updates. I will continue to update you as we navigate this challenging time.

### **Faith Knowledge Assessments**

The Faith Knowledge Assessments testing scheduled for this spring in religious formation classes will not take place. When religious education is able to reconvene, it was felt the testing would be difficult and the focus needs to be on pastorally helping our students after getting through the current situation.

### **Confirmation, First Communion and Holy Week**

Confirmations and First Communion liturgies are postponed through April 15. Archbishop Gregory has assembled a task force consisting of the archbishop, Fr. Conrad Murphy, Fr. Martino Choi, Terry Farrell and myself to assess how best to approach Holy Week in the current environment. Information will be issued at some point next week.

### **Questions About Receiving the Eucharist**

It must be difficult for you as pastors and parish priests to not be able to feed your flock with the Body and Blood of Jesus, an act that is at the core of one's priesthood and ministry. With good and holy intentions, a number of priests are being approached by the faithful, asking to be able to receive the Eucharist on an ad hoc basis or to be provided a means to receive the Eucharist regularly (e.g., a drive-thru communion service or at the rectory or in the church during private prayer). As we have been asked many questions on this topic, I thought it would be good to address it to assist your flock in understanding the guidelines about receiving the Eucharist outside of Mass when public Masses are suspended.

Given the connection between the Eucharist and the Sacrifice of the Mass, the rites of the Church envision that the reception of the Eucharist outside of Mass

is the exception, normally limited to Communion to the sick or utilizing a Liturgy of the Word in cases where the celebration Mass is not possible. At this time when public celebration of Mass is suspended, public celebrations of the Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion is also suspended. Therefore, the practice of distributing Holy Communion to the faithful on an individual, ad hoc basis (aside from pastoral care to the sick) is to be avoided.

Pastors are encouraged to communicate to their faithful the value of making a spiritual Communion. The graces of a sacramental Communion are present in a spiritual Communion: “[through] their desire for the sacrament in union with the Church, no matter how distant they may be physically, they are intimately and really united to her and therefore receive the fruits of the sacrament” even absent the sacramental sign (CDF, Letter to Bishops on Certain Questions Concerning the Minister of the Eucharist). It may also be helpful to see that embracing this cross of limited access to the Sacrament is our path to sanctity, an opportunity to die to ourselves and our desires – as faith-filled as they may be. For any further clarification, please contact Rev. Martino Choi, Director of the Office of Worship ([ChoiM@adw.org](mailto:ChoiM@adw.org), 301-853-4595).

### **Lenten Food Drive**

This is a difficult time as we try to balance the safety of our community while still addressing the requirements of those most in need. The Annual ADW Lenten Food Drive (LFD) is scheduled for this weekend. The food collected during this drive is critically important to many of the food banks and food pantries in the archdiocese. The need to support our neighbors has not diminished and there are growing indications that need will increase. The Secretariat of Pastoral Ministry & Social Concerns and Catholic Charities are fully aware of and supportive of the food drive.

Many parishes have already made the decision to cancel or postpone the LFD. We recognize that this is a difficult decision and each parish community, in collaboration with the pastor, will need to discern participation on its own. However, several parishes have asked “Is the food drive still on? What can we do to help?”

Should your parish wish to move forward with a collection, Catholic Charities is available to help. Parishes that wish to donate the food to their own ministry or another local pantry are encouraged to do so. Parishes that choose to move forward and donate food to one of the area pantries or local food banks are asked to email Deacon Jim Nalls at Catholic Charities at [james.nalls@cc-dc.org](mailto:james.nalls@cc-dc.org). Parishes will be contacted directly by Catholic Charities to coordinate pick up of donated food.

We recognize the challenge this situation presents. There is no right or wrong decision. We believe this charitable act can be accomplished keeping a healthy

“social distance” for all involved and adhering to the necessary local authorities’ guidelines and precautions.

A follow up email will be sent to understand your parishes participation. Feel free to contact Deacon Jim Nalls at [james.nalls@cc-dc.org](mailto:james.nalls@cc-dc.org) if you have any questions. Thank you for your prayerful consideration of this matter.

### **Catholic Schools Office Letter to Parents**

Linked [here](#) is a letter from Bill Ryan, Secretary of Catholic Schools that was sent to all Catholic school parents and guardians.

### **Digital Media**

As many are increasing their efforts in strategies for reaching parishioners during this time, we want you to know that the ADW Office of Digital Media is here to support you. The Office of Digital Media has created a [website](#) with the following resources:

- Information on using social media effectively
- Tips for improving your website or launching a free eCatholic site
- Email communication strategies and Flocknote resources

The Digital Media team can be reached at [digitalmedia@adw.org](mailto:digitalmedia@adw.org).

### **Guide to Livestreaming (Masses, the Rosary, Stations of the Cross)**

Many parishes have begun live-streaming Masses so that parishioners can participate from home. If your parish isn't doing this but wants to begin, you can get started immediately. The good news is that anyone can quickly and easily begin streaming to Facebook or YouTube using nothing more than a smart phone.

### **Equipment**

The most basic setup includes your smartphone, a [tripod](#) and a microphone. A wireless mic like [this one](#) will pick up your pastor's voice and make the audio very clear. Once the camera and microphone are set up, you simply go live on Facebook to begin streaming.

Another option is to purchase a webcam - [this blog post](#) has some great information and a list of recommended webcams. Webcams plug into your computer, where you can either download [streaming software](#) or log into your video streaming platform and begin your video.

### **Streaming to Facebook**

If your parish has a Facebook page, streaming a Mass is as simple as beginning a live video from your page. Here is a [step-by-step guide](#) to getting started from TechSoup.

### **Streaming to YouTube**

If your YouTube channel has fewer than 1000 subscribers, you won't be able to stream on your phone. Rather, you'll need a webcam. [Here](#) is more information on streaming to YouTube.

**Pope's request to pray Rosary at 4 p.m. EDT tomorrow on the Feast of St. Joseph**

Pope Francis asks the Church in Italy: 'Pray the Rosary (Luminous mysteries) at 9 p.m. Rome time (4 p.m. Eastern) on Thursday':

"Tomorrow we will celebrate the Solemnity of Saint Joseph. In life, in work, in the family, in joy and in sorrow, he always sought and loved the Lord, meriting Scripture's praise as a just and wise man. Invoke him always with trust, especially in difficult moments, and entrust your existence to this great Saint. I make my own the appeal of the Italian Bishops who in this health emergency have promoted a moment of prayer for the whole country. Every family, every faithful, every Religious Community, all united spiritually tomorrow at 9:00 pm for the recitation of the Rosary, with the Mysteries of Light. I will accompany you from here. Mary, Mother of God, Health of the Sick, leads us to the luminous and transfigured face of Jesus Christ and to His Heart. We turn to Her with the prayer of the Rosary, under the loving gaze of Saint Joseph, Custodian of the Holy Family and of our families. And we ask him to guard our family, our families, in a special way, in particular the sick and the persons taking care of the sick: the doctors, the men and women nurses, the volunteers, who risk their lives in this service."

**Remind the Faithful of Information on the Website**

Know that the archdiocesan website is being updated regularly with information, in English and Spanish, for you and the faithful. I encourage you to continue to share the website [adw.org/coronavirus](http://adw.org/coronavirus), which includes a link to find a listing of live stream Masses and prayers [adw.org/live-streamed-masses-and-prayers/](http://adw.org/live-streamed-masses-and-prayers/). As always, should you have questions or need assistance from my office and the Pastoral Center, please let us know. Please be assured of my continued prayers for you.

With gratitude for your priestly ministry, I am  
Reverend Daniel B. Carson  
Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia