



REVEREND DANIEL B. CARSON

VICAR GENERAL AND MODERATOR OF THE CURIA

Dear Brother Priest,

I write today to provide you updates. I will continue to keep you informed as we navigate this challenging time.

Catholic Schools

Mayor Bowser of D.C. and Governor Hogan of the State of Maryland have both now announced that D.C. and Maryland schools will remain closed through April 24, 2020. School principals are already aware of this and it is requested that you work with your principals to communicate the information. The current intent is to reopen on Monday, April 27, 2020. We will inform you of any updates as we continue to hear from the local jurisdictions. I commend the teachers of our schools that have done a great job at implementing distance learning with their students where possible.

Catholic Cemeteries Update

After hearing the concerns of the clergy and the faithful, please note that Catholic Cemeteries has modified their operating procedures as of this morning, March 25. While all Archdiocesan Cemeteries still remain closed to visitation, interments and entombments will continue with one car with up to five (5) family members, one clergy member, one funeral director and Catholic Cemetery representatives in attendance.

Important Update on DC and MD Mandates

Please note that the District has revised its mandate on gatherings and is now in line with the State of Maryland limiting gatherings up to a maximum of 10 persons for all ages. Any gathering must adhere to this limit and to the social distancing precautions. At the pastor's discretion, you can remain open for private prayer and confession but be sure to follow all guidelines and precautions. It is also noted that if you recently returned from travel to the New York City area, you are required to self-quarantine for 14 days.

It continues to be at the pastors' discretion if their parish office remains open while following the 10 person mandated limit and with the following in mind:

- Staff should be strongly encouraged to work remotely when possible and focus on core business activities. In-person, non-mandatory activities should be delayed until the resumption of normal operations.
- When continuous remote work is not possible, pastors should enlist strategies to reduce the likelihood of spreading the disease. This includes, but is not necessarily limited to, separating staff by off-setting shift hours or days and/or social distancing. These steps can preserve the workforce and allow operations to continue.

Human Resources and Staffing

Detailed guidance from the Office of Human Resources concerning staffing, benefits, etc. is expected to be available to pastors no later than Friday, March 27.

Use of MDLIVE – access to health care remotely

As previously communicated, <https://www.mdlive.com/> gives you secure access to health care from the convenience of your phone, computer or tablet. MD Live also provides behavioral health assistance through online counseling sessions. This is available to the clergy and employees who have health insurance through the Archdiocese of Washington. You can go to the website and register for MD Live now. That way your account will be ready to go if you need to contact a doctor. This is an excellent resource if you have a non-emergency medical need and are concerned about going to your doctor's office.

Remind the Faithful of Information on the Website

The archdiocesan website in response to the coronavirus is 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/ which includes a [link](#) to find a listing of live stream Masses and prayers.

On this day when we celebrate the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, I wanted to share with you these words from St. Bernard of Clairvaux describing how our Blessed Mother can walk with us in this life to lead us closer to our Lord and words that I find comforting especially during this challenging time:

"In dangers, in doubts, in difficulties, think of Mary, call upon Mary. Let not her name depart from your lips, never suffer it to leave your heart. And that you may obtain the assistance of her prayer, neglect not to walk in her footsteps. With her as your guide, you shall never go astray; while invoking her, you shall never lose heart; so long as she is in your mind, you are safe from deception; while she holds your hand, you cannot fall; under her protection you have nothing to fear; if she walks before you, you shall not grow weary; if she shows you favor, you shall reach the goal."

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 prayers for you.

With deep appreciation for your priestly ministry, I am
Sincerely in Christ,
Reverend Daniel B. Carson
Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia