

March 12, 2020

To God's People of St. Peter's, Casa Grande,

God is our sure rock in the storm. With this in mind, I'd like to update you on the changes you will see for the remainder of Lent.

There is great concern about the COVID-19 outbreak and there may be many more undiagnosed cases in our communities. Although for most people the illness poses low risk, for the elderly, vulnerable, and immunocompromised it can be deadly. We can work to slow the spread of the disease down so that our health system is not overwhelmed. Effective today, March 12, 2020, our congregation will take the following precautions to protect the vulnerable among us:

- Sunday worship, both 8 and 10 AM services, will continue until otherwise notified by health authorities or our Bishop. We will have morning prayer and will not have Eucharist until Easter. We are working on plans to live-stream Sunday services and will notify you when available.
- Bulletins contain all material for services. Hymnals will be used; they are sanitized for the 10AM service and congregants will pick up their own in the Narthex. Please return the hymnals to the table in the Narthex for cleaning. Please take the bulletin home with you; we will use the same for the rest of Lent. All used bulletins will be discarded, so your re-use of personal bulletins save us resources. Sunday School and the Nursery is suspended. Our nursery workers will continue to be paid.
- Before worship, we will go over door handles, pew tops, restroom handles, locks, and faucets with household cleanser. This cleaning will be repeated after each worship service.
- Your Bishop's Committee and I will be checking in on you via phone in the upcoming days. If you are in a high-risk group; the elderly, immunocompromised, or have underlying health conditions, please consider staying home from worship and join us online or via paper bulletin.
- **If you are ill, please remain at home. We will abstain from physical contact at St. Peter's; no hugging or handshakes.**
- We will fast from Coffee Hour during Lent. All use of the Parish Hall, (outside groups, ministry meetings, etc.) is suspended. We will do our best to maintain continuity with video or telephone conference formats. One exception is the Saturday night Narcotics Anonymous meeting as these meetings are vital to maintain recovery. They will be asked to sanitize the space after each meeting.

As Christians, it is natural for us to feel fear, but remember that throughout the Bible, ordinary people are told by Jesus and angels to, "Be not afraid."

Pray for our country and our world during this difficult time. Pray for the ill, those who cannot work, those who are alone in quarantine, and all suffering from the current economic disruptions. Prayer is effective, and it is a ministry Christians can engage in on behalf of our neighbors and ourselves.

Please know I am praying for you, your families and those you care for. Thank you for your support as we respond to this crisis with courageous love.

– *Father Dave*

Blessed is the LORD! for he has heard the voice of my prayer. The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I have been helped; Psalm 28: 7,8