



# ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

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March 20, 2020

Dear Parishioners of Seton Lake Ridge,

I cannot tell you how blessed I am to be your pastor and to have the honor of shepherding you, the faithful of our dear parish. I am uniting my daily prayers with yours for a speedy resolution to this pandemic and the national (and global) emergency that we are all experiencing. I imagine none of us ever expected our Lent to proceed in this fashion: no public Masses for the foreseeable future, parish activities suspended, no Stations of the Cross, current restrictions on public gatherings and the understandable anxiety and fear of a virus that we still know so little about. Yet, here we are.

In spite of the current situation, we still have a loving Savior who consoles us with his Presence: *"...and lo, I am with you always to the close of the age,"* (Matthew 28:20); This promise of our Lord's, the promise of His Presence or His "I AM", ought to be a great source of comfort and consolation in the midst of these very uncertain times. We are reminded by St. Paul that, *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of instruction. God didn't give us a cowardly spirit but a spirit of power, love, and good judgment.*" (2 Timothy 1:7)

I have been so edified by all the emails, calls and general interactions where so many have expressed their support, prayers and generous offers to help in any way possible. I am equally inspired by the depth of the faith and the great longing and hunger for the Eucharist. Please God, may the suspension of public Masses be short-lived. Although Fr. Dort and I continue to celebrate daily Mass, we share this pain in our inability to nourish you, our spiritual children, with the "Food from Heaven", our Lord Himself.

Rest assured that all Mass intentions are being fulfilled on the day in which they were scheduled to be offered. Also, for those Sunday Masses we will continue to pray for the sick and deceased that would normally be mentioned, so please to let us know of the names of those you wish to add to this list.

With so many contacting me about the possibility of attending one of our private Masses (even if only 10 other people are present), or to even simply receive the Eucharist, I cannot begin to fathom how we could equitably consider accommodating those who have inquired, let alone the numerous others who would also desire to attend. Therefore, the Bishop has asked us to only offer our private Masses in the Rectory Chapel. I thank everyone for your understanding and ask a special prayer intention that Fr. Dort and I remain healthy enough to offer these daily Masses, many of which are for your intentions and those of your loved ones.

While public Masses are suspended, Bishop Burbidge has also dispensed all the faithful of the Diocese from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass and Holy Days of Obligation. There are, however, many ways in which you can grow in faith during this challenging time as the coronavirus spreads. Especially on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, the faithful are encouraged to devote time to prayer, observe Mass on television or the internet, and pray the Rosary, along with other devotions.

Therefore, I encourage you to gather as a family to watch Mass online, or at least read and discuss the readings for Mass and wear your Sunday best. If possible, follow the postures of standing, kneeling and sitting while watching Mass and make a spiritual communion with this or a similar prayer:

*My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.*

Catholics are encouraged to pray this way whenever we are unable to receive the Holy Communion. Making a Spiritual Communion is filled with differing graces and also increases our desire for actual reception of the Eucharist.

Below is a list of resources you may want to consider (Click blue wording for links):

#### **Online Masses**

- [Vatican News Pope Francis' Masses](#) (Daily in Italian with English subtitles)
- [EWTN Daily Mass](#) (Daily)
- [Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception](#) (Sunday only)
- [Sunday Televised Mass Flyer](#)

#### **Prayers**

- [Diocese of Arlington 'Prayer to Jesus for Healing and Guidance'](#)
- [Pope Francis' Prayer to Mary for COVID-19](#)
- [Archbishop Gomez Prayer for COVID-19](#)
- [Light a Candle Online \(from the National Shrine of St. John Neumann\)](#)

#### **Publisher Resources:**

The following publishers have generously made their resources available to support prayer during these difficult days. We thank them for their generosity and pastoral concern.

- [Liturgical Press: Give Us This Day](#)
- [Magnificat: English. |Spanish](#)

#### **U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops:**

- [Daily Readings: English | Spanish](#)
- [Daily Readings Audio](#)
- [Video Reflection](#)

At this time, the **Parish Office** will have slightly shortened office hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and closed on Sundays. Please note that the **Church** remains open: Sunday-Saturday 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. All are welcome to come for private prayer, to make individual Stations of the Cross, etc. keeping in mind “social distancing” and in groups of 10 or fewer. The reception area to the Office will be open while the Church is open, should you need to drop anything off. Simply utilize the mail-slot on the inside office door in the reception waiting area.

Beginning Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> our **Human Concerns Ministry** will be coordinating volunteers who are able and willing to shop for groceries and pharmacy items for other parishioners who are unable because they are in a high-risk category. Stay tuned, more information to come next week.

Please stay connected! We are still publishing our weekly bulletin, in reduced numbers. These hard copies are located in the narthex. We also encourage you to sign-up to receive the bulletin each week via email or by visiting our parish web-site. (Click blue wording for links):

[Subscribe to Seton Lake Ridge Church Bulletin](#)

[View Seton Lake Ridge Church Bulletin](#)

...also, if you haven't already, this would be a wonderful time to sign-up for our parish App!

[Get our parish App](#)

Please visit the our own web-site [www.SetonLakeridge.org](http://www.SetonLakeridge.org) for the most up to date notices and the Diocese of Arlington web-site [www.ArlingtonDiocese.org](http://www.ArlingtonDiocese.org) for additional information and latest press releases.

Finally, I also strongly encourage everyone to pray daily for a quick resolution to this pandemic through the powerful intercession of our Blessed Mother, Mary; remembering those who are affected by the Coronavirus; the sick, the deceased, their loved ones and all of our civil leaders and health care workers. Please also join me in daily reciting the Diocesan Prayer below so that we may be unified with the Diocese during this time.

Sincerely in Christ,



Reverend Brian G. Bashista,  
Pastor

**A Prayer to Jesus for Healing and Guidance**

Jesus, Son of God, you were sent by the Father to bear our weakness;  
be with us in this time of crisis.

Merciful Savior, heal and comfort the sick,  
so that, with health restored, they may give you praise.

Divine Physician, accompany our caregivers so that,  
serving with patience, they may heal wisely.

Eternal Wisdom, guide our leaders so that,  
seeking remedies, they may follow your light.

Christ, the Anointed, protect us in body and spirit,  
so that, freed from harm, we may be delivered from all affliction.

Who live and reign with God the Father  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever, Amen.