



- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -

**DIOCESE OF GARY**  
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The leadership of the Diocese of Gary continues to closely monitor the CDC and the Indiana Department of Public Health regarding the coronavirus. In response to recommendations from the State of Indiana, the Diocese of Gary issues the following directives in service to the health and well-being of the Northwest Indiana community.

- While at this time there are no documented cases in any of the four counties served by the diocese, these proactive measures are intended to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- Most Reverend Robert J. McClory has dispensed the Catholic faithful from their obligation to attend Sunday Mass effective March 14-15, March 21-22 and March 28-29. The dispensation does not remove the obligation to keep the Lord's Day holy, which requires that we seek to refrain from work, increase our love of the Lord and extend charity to others through prayer and service.
- Mass will continue to be celebrated across the diocese, however some parishes may adjust their liturgical schedule. All are encouraged to check with local parishes to confirm Mass times.
- Parishes have received specific liturgical guidelines to minimize exposure to illness. The faithful who may be ill, or who are vulnerable to infection due to age or other factors (CDC.gov), are asked to refrain from attending Mass. For the well-being of all, worshipers are asked to avoid physical contact with others during Mass. In addition, parishes are temporarily suspending the offering of the Precious Blood during Eucharist.
- Effective March 14, all parish and school gatherings, including Catholic schools and Faith Formation are to be suspended through April 3. Parish and diocesan offices will remain open. The faithful are encouraged to use the phone, email and website resources.
- During this time of challenge and uncertainty, Bishop McClory encourages the faithful to lift in prayer, the sick, the suffering, healthcare workers, care providers and those vulnerable to illness. He further encourages us to be mindful of others in need. Social distance does not mean spiritual distance. As the Body of Christ, if one part suffers we all suffer with it.
- Anyone unable to attend Holy Mass may find an opportunity to watch Mass on television or online (including stations such as EWTN or locally, on WGN at 9:30 a.m. on Sundays) or set aside the same time for prayer and reflection. Daily readings are available on USCCB.org or through the NWI Catholic newspaper (or nwicatholic.com).
- Additional spiritual and devotional practices can be found on [www.dcgary.org](http://www.dcgary.org).

The Diocese of Gary will continue to monitor the CDC, USCCB, state and local health care agencies for COVID-19 protocols and offer updated recommendations and policies regarding the coronavirus.