

Coronavirus Update:

As of this day, Tuesday, March 24th, here are the updates about all things Saint Mary Magdalen during this difficult time of, “shelter in place.”

- 1) First of all, in order to access Instagram, that can be done on a smart phone and/or tablet only. It cannot be accessed through computers at this point in time. I know many people are wondering why we are not live-streaming through YouTube. We are working on this and hopefully will have it available soon. And, at that point, the idea would be to both live-stream through YouTube and Instagram. But, for now, Instagram is the way the parish is live-streaming. I am working with the Tech arm of the parish to expand live-streaming. Please stay tuned. But, for now, you can access Instagram more easily via tablet and smart phone by going to the parish website and clicking on the Instagram tab at the top of the page; it will lead you directly to the stmmchurchmass live-stream.
- 2) I am sending these updates out on a regular basis. However, the information we receive is changing often--sometimes by the hour--and I wait to offer a parish update until the full explanation or result of these ever changing public notices is understood.
- 3) Monsignor Ramacciotti and I are keeping all Masses as they are, both weekday and weekend. This is done for 4 reasons:
 - a. Out of respect for the dates chosen for the Mass Intentions. Oftentimes the specific dates for Masses are for very good and important reasons for families and loved ones. We want to offer the Masses at the regularly scheduled times out of respect for the dates chosen.
 - b. To offer the regular schedule of Masses keeps a sense of normalcy in this difficult and challenging time. And, people can depend on this schedule.
 - c. Even though we are not physically together for these Masses, there is still a sense of community that is being established—I think????—with these live-streaming Masses; and, a sense of a community is essential for us all times. I might be wrong on this but just knowing that people are tuning in and a part of the Mass is comforting; it lets us know we are part of the prayer and a community of believers.
 - d. And, finally, there is a grace attached to each Mass that we can all certainly embrace right now. The spiritual fruitfulness of these Masses is far reaching. That is essential to building up the Kingdom of Heaven on earth!

Sacramental Update:

Holy Hour:

- 1) Beginning Tuesday, March 24th, every weekday at 3:00 p.m. a Holy Hour will be live-streamed on Instagram: stmmchurchmass. We will begin with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, offer the Divine Mercy Chapel, offer the Rosary, and then the remaining time of the Holy Hour will be private adoration in front of the Blessed Sacrament. Benediction will occur at 4:00 p.m. The intention of this Holy Hour will be simple; that is, to pray for an end to the coronavirus.

2) Lenten Season:

All weekday and weekend Masses will be offered at the regular times. All Masses will be live-streamed on Instagram: stmmchurchmass.

3) Sacrament of Reconciliation Schedule:

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered at the following times:

Tuesday—Friday: 11:15 a.m.—11:45 a.m.

Tuesday and Wednesday: 5:50 p.m.

Thursday afternoon: 4:30 p.m.—5:15 p.m.

Saturday: 3:30 p.m.—4:15 p.m.

A reminder that with offering the Sacrament of Reconciliation, social distancing is required. All people are asked to stay 6 feet away from each other and the Sacrament will only be offered behind the screen with 6 feet between the Priest and the person.

4) Holy Week Services:

Holy Week Services have been canceled; the Archbishop of Saint Louis made this announcement on Sunday, March 22. This includes Palm Sunday, all of the days of Holy Week including Holy Thursday, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil, and Easter Sunday. Now, while the public nature of these services has been suspended, the clergy can offer Masses and services *sine populo*; that is, without the people.

With this in mind, Monsignor Ramacciotti and I have agreed to offer all of the Palm Sunday weekend Masses—Saturday Evening (4:30 p.m.), April 4th and Sunday morning (7:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.), April 5.

During Monday—Wednesday of Holy Week, we will celebrate all weekday Masses.

We will celebrate Holy Thursday Mass: 7:00 p.m.

We will celebrate the Good Friday Service: 3:00 p.m.

We will celebrate the Easter Vigil: 7:00 p.m.

We will celebrate all Sunday morning Easter Masses: 7:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.

While these Masses and services will be offered without a congregation, we will live-stream all Masses on Instagram: stmmchurchmass

5) Saint Mary Magdalen School:

The latest information from the Catholic Education Office of the Archdiocese of Saint Louis has moved back a potential restart of school to Monday, April 27th. During this mandated

suspension of school, the students will be using e-teaching with the teachers offering classes and assignments on-line and via live-streaming.

6) Family Faith Formation:

The schedule for Family Faith Formation is also in flux at this time. I would ask the Family Faith Formation students to please check in time to time with Jen Meehan, Coordinator of the Program, for the latest updates on the calendar.

7) First Communion:

First Communion is slated for Saturday, April 18th; this will be postponed until we can all gather together again in Church. I am sorry to the 2nd graders and their families for this delay but it is unavoidable at this time. As soon as things are back to normal, both Saint Mary Magdalen School and the Family Faith Formation program will send out word on a new date.

8) Saint Mary Magdalen Picnic:

The Saint Mary Magdalen Picnic slated for Friday evening, May 15th and all day Saturday, May 16th has been canceled for this year. I am sorry for this but with the amount of planning required for this, with the contracts that need to be signed for this, and with the uncertainty of where our nation/world will be with the coronavirus, the decision has been made to cancel the picnic this year. Now, that being said, at some point, when things are back to normal, there will be a scaled back version of the picnic with booths, music, food, etc. But, unfortunately, the picnic will be canceled for this year.

9) Saint Mary Magdalen Capital Campaign:

As you know, a decision was made to do a feasibility study to see how folks would feel about a Capital Campaign to finish all of the major infrastructure work at the parish:

- Church roof
- Parking lot
- Church tuckpointing
- Protecting the 2nd story Church stain glass windows
- Concrete work

But, with this coronavirus, the financial board decided to delay this feasibility study until things get back to normal.

10) Dominican Garden:

At this point, with restricted funds that are solely to be used for the Dominican Garden Park, there is a movement to do all of the asbestos removal work in the convent and tear it down. This effort is still moving forward. However, in terms of the creation of the park, this will be delayed until things get back to normal.

And, finally, as I read this update, it dawns on me that everything is either canceled or postponed and that is depressing. But, things will get back to normal, and when they do can you imagine the celebration we can have as a community? It will be awesome. So,

for now, let us pray for an end to this virus; let us pray for all who are on the front lines battling this virus; let us pray for all of those who are sick from this virus; let us pray for those who have lost their lives; and let us pray in gratitude for what we have.

Fr. Jack Siefert