



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF JOHANNESBURG TIKOLOHO E KATHOLIKE EA ISIFUNDABHISHOBHI SASE

PRIVATE BAG X 10 • DOORNFONTEIN • 2028
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Dear Monsignor / Bishop / Rev. Father / Rev. Deacon / Rev. Religious Superior / People of God

President Cyril Ramaphosa, the President of the Republic, in his address to the nation on the 23 March 2020 enforced an effective measure in order to mitigate the further spread of COVID-19, a nationwide lockdown for the duration of 21 days, effective from midnight on Thursday 26 March 2020.

In a similar manner, I hereby convey to you the following pronouncements in line with the Exhortations from the Holy Father.

PUBLIC MASSES

ALL PUBLIC MASSES, both on weekdays and weekends are suspended indefinitely with effect on Thursday 26 March 2020 at midday until the lockdown is over and there is greater clarity on the way forward.

CHRISM MASS

The Mass of the Oils is cancelled during Holy Week and is postponed until further notice

EASTER TRIDUUM

Easter constitutes the heart of the entire liturgical year. It therefore cannot be transferred to a later time. This means that **there will be NO Easter Triduum celebrations** (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil) and the Sacraments for full initiation for the candidates and catechumens will be postponed to later in the year as determined by the Archbishop in consultation with the parish priest.

Kindly give encouragement and hope to all those who were expecting to receive the Sacraments at Easter and assure them that as soon as the restrictions are lifted that the celebrations will take place.

MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Holy Father has granted in the Decree in Time of COVID-19 the faculty to all priests to celebrate this Mass ALONE and omit the procession to the place of repose – the sacrament is to be reserved in the usual tabernacle.

BAPTISMS

The administering of the Sacrament of Baptism is not allowed during this time with the exception of cases of emergency.

FUNERAL MASSES

Funeral Masses during this time is not allowed. Funeral services without a Mass may be held at the graveside but be aware of the number of attendees. A memorial Mass can be scheduled for later. Or the funeral may be delayed altogether until later. If the Funeral service will take place kindly consult with your local Police Station for a permit.



COMMUNION TO THE SICK

In view of the nationwide lockdown enforced by the Government, all daily/weekly ministering of Holy Communion to the house bound is cancelled. I appeal to your discretion when the danger of death presents itself. At the same time keeping in mind that "*ecclesia supplet*" meaning that in our ineffectiveness "the Church supplies".

RESOURCES FOR THE DOMESTIC CHURCH (HOMES)

- Radio Veritas (576 AM or DSTV Audio 870) will broadcast the Mass on a daily basis and provide a live-stream option which can be found on their website www.radioveritas.co.za
- The Jesuit Institute will live-stream all Sunday Masses and the Easter Triduum Celebrations. Please check the Jesuit website at www.jesuitinstitute.org.za
- Bryanston catholic Church of the Resurrection will also live-stream Masses at <https://www.bryanstoncatholic.co.za/resources/liturgy-of-the-word/>
- The **faithful are strongly encouraged to gather as a family for the Liturgy of the Word** by spending time in prayer, reading the Word of God of the Sunday Liturgy and interceding for the world that this COVID-19 virus will be contained and eradicated.
- **Pray the Rosary** and other devotional prayers
- **Since the faithful are unable to attend Mass or to receive Holy Communion**, they are encouraged to **unite themselves to Christ in prayer through what is known as spiritual communion**. As Pope St. John Paul II explained in his encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (no.34), when it is not possible to receive communion it is beneficial to cultivate in your heart a constant desire for the sacrament.

In conclusion I say to you brothers and sisters, dispel your fears and never lose hope, because God is with us. Although we do not at this time publically celebrate Holy Mass, we can still encounter Christ in our lives. Let us invoke God's grace of strength and courage as one faith family, so we can withstand our trials and difficulties. Let us together seek the maternal intercession of Our Blessed Mother Mary, that our trust in God's power and through His Son, help us end this pandemic and grant us salvation.

Even during these difficult times we continue to be eternally thankful for who you are and what you do for the archdiocese.

Given this **25th day of March 2020** in the Archdiocese of Johannesburg, FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD

+ Buti Thagale OMI

+ The Most Reverend Archbishop Buti Thagale OMI

