

Dear Fellow Parishioners:

I am sure that all have heard that the decision has been made by Bishop Barbarito in response to the public directives that “in our Diocese all Catholic churches will not be available for the attendance or personal visit by the faithful, effective Friday, March 20, until further notifications.” Please note as the Bishop indicated in his letter that masses are not suspended and will continue to be celebrated on a daily and Sunday basis though public participation is excluded. We at St. Helen will, of course, comply with this decision so that effective immediately the Church and Chapel are not available for use.

Here are the steps we are taking to further comply with the Bishop’s letter, to adhere to the prescribed health suggestions and the safety and personal needs of our parishioners and staff:

1. The Church office will be closed except to those with appointments or emergency needs. The phone will be answered by staff as normal on Monday-Friday, 9am-4pm. Parishioners questions and needs will be handled accordingly. We in the office are here to do whatever is needed but this procedure is an attempt to reduce the otherwise on-site visitors.
2. The Outreach office hours are varying but it is likely they will not be staffing the office. All requests for assistance that would otherwise go to Outreach should call the Church office and someone from the Outreach ministry will respond. Our second Outreach location in the new United Against Poverty location, at this time, will remain open. Those in need are encouraged to visit this facility.
3. We are in the process of setting up videos on the St. Helen web site to help keep you informed and to provide needed spiritual guidance during this time. We will continue with morning prayer by the deacons, stations of the cross and other messages from our priests and various ministry leaders.
4. We also have several means of responding to parishioners’ questions and needs. We are posting all current information on the St. Helen app and web site, so we do ask that you please check these for routine questions and information. Unanswered questions or any specific needs which the parish might be able to assist with, should be submitted through the Web site, the phone app, or directly by calling the office phone.

As you are aware, all plans are subject to change. Please visit the web site frequently and send your suggestions and comments to the office. Be assured that though the Church doors are required to be locked the Church is not closed. We are the Church, the Body of Christ and as we will proclaim in a special way on Easter morning, He lives and He reigns.

Deacon dave