

Dear St. Therese Parish Family,

As you know, Governor Whitmer has issued a “shelter in place” order for many non-essential businesses and organizations. The Diocese of Lansing has studied the order thoroughly and has concluded that according to this order and her previous executive order, churches are considered essential organizations. Essentially, though, our office will be closed during the week. I am the one who has been answering phone calls, many of which have been for St. Vincent de Paul, which is also considered an essential organization and is up and running. Thank you to our SVDP volunteers who are continuing to serve during this challenging time in which so many are out of work and are struggling to maintain their households.

During this time, we will be communicating with you mostly by email. We are looking to update our webpage and to establish a Facebook page. As much as possible, we will be trying to compose a short weekly bulletin that will be online. Stephanie Smith, our Director of Religious Education, has been sending out emails during the work week that contain a list of activities that families can do at home with one another. If you would like to be added to her email list, please contact her at ssmithdre@gmail.com

Like many of you, I am “sheltering in place” and working from home, which, of course, is the rectory. If you need to get ahold of me, please contact the parish office at 487-3749, and leave a message. If your call is urgent, please contact 487-3711. Fr. Bill Lugger is assisting me as needed. We will be trying to keep the church open from 9AM - 12 Noon. If it is locked, please call 487-3711, and if I am around, I will open the church for you.

Some of our parishioners have continued to mail or to drop off their Sunday envelopes and financial donations to the St. Vincent de Paul. Thank you so much! Please remember that we still have bills to pay. You can also give by going to <http://www.sttherese.org> At the top of the page is EGIVE, which is a secure way to make a donation to the parish. I greatly appreciate your continued generosity to our parish.

We have a number of Mass Intentions that have been scheduled, and I will be offering Mass for these intentions. Please know that I also will be praying for our parishioners during these Masses.

I will be sending out periodic emails that contain news updates and prayers that you can say at home. As a sign of religious unity, Pope Francis has called upon all Christians to say the “Our Father” at midday on Wednesday, March 25. Please join him and others around the world in prayer.

Attached at the bottom of this email is a beautiful prayer composed by Kerry Weber of America Magazine. Please join me in saying this prayer.

Fr. John Fain

Jesus Christ, you traveled through towns and villages “curing every disease and illness.” At your command, the sick were made well. Come to our aid now, in the midst of the global spread of the coronavirus, that we may experience your healing love.

Heal those who are sick with the virus. May they regain their strength and health through quality medical care.

Heal us from our fear, which prevents nations from working together and neighbors from helping one another.

Heal us from our pride, which can make us claim invulnerability to a disease that knows no borders.

Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.
Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace.

Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May they know your peace.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.

Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace.

Jesus Christ, heal us.

Amen.