

Faith Members,

Here is the latest regarding the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation. Governor Holcomb has issued an Executive Stay-At-Home Order, which means that everyone is to stay in their homes except for when they are engaged in “necessary” or “essential” activities (such as work, or obtaining necessary supplies). However, this need NOT alter further how we continue to administer and receive God’s gifts here at Faith, because the Body & Blood of Jesus are necessary and essential for the nurturing of faith.

I say that in light of a correspondence I received from our District President: the Rev. Daniel Brege. President Brege has been in contact with the Governor’s office, and has communicated the importance to Christians of receiving the Sacrament of the Lord’s Body & Blood. In President Brege’s words:

“I spoke with a representative of Governor Holcomb’s office, explaining the importance and centrality of celebrating our Lord’s Supper, and I was assured that visiting families and giving Holy Communion to groups of 10 or less would be in compliance with the Governor’s EO, as long as the CDC (Center for Disease Control) and local regulations were being followed.”

President Brege also said this:

“I am thankful that our modern technology enables a forum for sharing the Word of Christ. Remind God’s people that the celebration of the Lord’s Supper is essential, and that it cannot be received electronically. Also, hearing the Word on a monitor or TV screen is NOT the same as assembling together and receiving the Word as a congregation. The gathering and assembling together is an important physical reality that cannot be replaced. Yes, a person can survive on crackers and water for quite some time, but ultimately a fully nutritious meal must be received. So it is spiritually: we can be nourished to a degree via the blessing of electronic media, but ultimately God’s people pray for reception of the superior nutrition distributed in person. This is also true concerning pastors making personal visitations vs ‘only’ giving them encouragement electronically.”

In light of the assurance of the Governor’s representative that, in the words of President Brege, “visiting families and giving Holy Communion to groups of 10 or less would be in compliance with the Governor’s EO,” we here at Faith do NOT need to change anything we’re currently doing. Which means, again ...

The shortened Divine Services that we celebrated last week (at 9:00, 10:00, 11:00 and 12:00) will continue to be held. The 9:00 and 10:00 services are already filled, but there are a few spots open at 11:00 and 12:00. Remember that members need to contact me via phone or e-mail to reserve a spot for one of these services. If you use e-mail, I will respond to your request to confirm your spot. Please make sure you get a response from me before you come to church, to ensure that we do not have more than ten people at any one time. If we need to offer more services, we will.

I will continue to be available to visit members who either cannot, or do not feel comfortable attending one of these services, in order to bring them the Sacrament. Simply e-mail (pastorwdo@faithgreenfield.org) or phone me (317-498-9421) and I'll be right there.

To enable our congregation to retain a corporate prayer life, we will continue to make available on our congregation's website (www.faithgreenfield.org) the weekly Our Congregation In Prayer devotion sheets, which we recently began handing out after worship on Sundays.

Sermons will continue to be e-mailed to all members, and they are also available on our website.

Sunday school and Sunday Bible class, as well as the Saturday morning men's Bible class, will continue to be suspended. Bible class and worship services for Wednesdays have already been suspended.

As I did last week, later in the week I will e-mail to you the Propers (and Sermon) for this Sunday.

Please remember to keep a watch on our congregations' website for all the latest information.

As our District President makes clear, believers in Jesus need to receive the Sacrament of His Body & Blood, for the forgiveness of their sins and the strengthening of their faith. As long as we can, we here at Faith will continue to make those gifts of our Lord available.

God's peace be with you in Christ Jesus.

Pastor O'Connor