

To all Ministry Leaders and members at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Fremont, CA

In the light of the recent developments regarding the COVID-19 situation, we would like to be more alert and attentive so as to be proactive to the best of our abilities. While our hearts, thoughts and prayers go out to the people who have been affected by this unprecedented event, we appreciate and support our healthcare workers, local communities, and governments around the world with our prayers. They are on the front line working to contain this coronavirus. Please know that we are vigilant to handle the COVID-19 situation with all possible precautions in place to ensure a safe environment for all who come to join our liturgies.

In this climate, please know that the safety of the faithful is our top priority. **I also want you all to Trust in the Lord and raise your prayers for ourselves, our community and the whole world.** I also would like to thank you in advance for your great diligence in following the safety indications from the Diocese.

Below is an update on what we are doing, keeping your safety our top Priority.

-  **Holy Water:** has been removed from font and entry ways, reducing the spread of corona virus through it. However, please continue to bless yourself with a sign of the Cross upon entering the Church.
-  **Sign of Peace:** it is not required that the faithful shake hands with those around until further notice. A respectful bow, smile or nod suffices.
-  **Greeting each other before or after Mass:** acknowledging verbally “Good morning”, “Good Evening” with a waving of hands would be best way.
-  **Keeping our church clean and without trash:** Please clean where you sit, especially if you are attending the celebration with your children. Please make sure that they have not left any water, tissues or food crumbs around.

- ✚ **Communion on hand:** Respecting the Eucharistic ministers, deacons or priests, who easily come into contact with the person receiving the communion, it is highly recommended to receive the Body of Christ in your hand avoiding any such contact.
- ✚ **No precious Blood:** We have suspended the distribution of the Precious Blood to the faithful.
- ✚ **Keeping the pews disinfected:** we are taking every precaution to disinfect the pews after celebrations.
- ✚ **Challenging times are times for prayer:** in these difficult times, our best recourse should be to the Lord and to his Blessed Mother. We will have the church open from morning 8:00 am – evening 5:00 pm. However, as we are suspending most other activities, we will keep the Church closed after office hours except when there is a scheduled celebration of Eucharist or adoration like on Wednesdays and Fridays.

We are also adopting the following precautions pertinent to all ministries in the parish.

- ✚ **School / Faith Formation Closure:** to safeguard our children from any kind of exposure, the Diocese has recommended that the Parish school be closed for few weeks from 18th - 31st of this month. At the same time, all Faith Formation classes will also be suspended.
- ✚ **Suspend or cancel all gatherings** unless otherwise it is of extreme urgent in nature and must have explicit authorization from the Pastor.
- ✚ **Cancel all events scheduled:** at the Parish hall, Parish center, Santa Paula, St. Leonard, Conference room, Dining room or St. Cecilia room, except those that have explicit authorization from the pastor based on the urgent nature of the meeting.
- ✚ **Prayer meetings:** While our prayers are very important in this situation, it is recommended that we avoid group gatherings. We will continue to

pray in private, at our homes and during our celebration of Eucharist. If any individual group needs to gather, make sure you have explicit authorization from the pastor.

✚ **Eucharist:** Because of the heightened concern for the well-being of all our people in light of the Coronavirus, the decision to attend Mass or not is left to each individual's discretion. Bishop Michael Barber is dispensing from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass for all Catholics in the Diocese of Oakland especially the elderly. Effective immediately, this dispensation will remain in effect until further notice. If anyone is not feeling well or suffer from an existing medical condition, they should stay home. This dispensation is in place to help mitigate the spread of the virus, while still giving people access to the Eucharist the source of love and peace.

✚ **Those attending the Eucharist:** please be mindful of the guidelines and observe them. These are there for the good of us all.

✚ **Eucharist to the Homebound:** Please refrain from bringing Eucharist to the homebound. In urgent cases, please

Above all Trust in the Lord! Let our faith tradition guide and comfort us through this troubling time by raising our prayer to the Lord. I invite all of you to pray for the end of this coronavirus situation, and for all those with any sickness that the Lord bless them with healing and comfort.

Here below two different prayers I would recommend we all recite during this time of need:

Prayer for the Pandemic Corona Virus situation

Almighty and merciful God, who show your love to all creation everywhere, hear graciously the prayers we make for all those affected by the corona Virus in various parts of the world.

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We come before you asking for a quick control of the outbreak, for the healing of those affected, for the victims and their families.

We pray for the doctors, nurses and healthcare workers that they may courageously and cautiously take care of those affected.

We pray for those doing the research that an effective vaccine to combat the sickness is speedily found.

We pray for the Government and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the People.

Lord, we ask all these through the loving intercession of our Blessed Mother Our Lady of Guadalupe - Amen

Pope Francis' Prayer for Healing

O Mary, you shine always on our way
as sign of our safety and hope.

We entrust ourselves to you,
Health of the Sick,
who at the foot of the Cross
bound yourself to the suffering of Jesus,
keeping strong in your faith.

O Salvation of God's people,
you know what we need
and we are sure you will provide it for us
just as at Cana of Galilee
the joy and feasting could return
after that moment of trial.

Mother of Divine Love, help us,
to conform ourselves to the will of the Father
and to do what Jesus tells us,
He who took upon Himself our sufferings
and is marked by our sorrows
and so lead us, toward the Cross,
to the joy of the Resurrection.

Amen.