March 19, St. Joseph pray for us.

My dear parishioners and other members of the St. Mary’s Cathedral Catholic Community

As I am sure you are all profoundly aware that the Ontario government has declared a state of emergency. As a result Archbishop Mulhall has suspended the public celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the foreseeable future. (Please see his letter attached to this email.) His Grace is well aware that this is a great suffering for all of us. How strange it feels that we will not be able to gather for the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. Please know that I will be celebrating the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass privately each day and offering it for your intentions and an end to COVID – 19.

If you are feeling particularly stressed or would like to talk know that I am available to be contacted by phone at 613-546-5521 ext. 4 and/or to arrange a time to meet together. The cathedral will remain open from 8 am to 8 pm each day for you to come and pray privately. Please ensure there are at least three pews between each of you. If you are very sick and require the Sacrament of the Sick please call and I will arrange to come to see you. I will continue to hear confessions at most of the regular times. (11:30 am to 12 noon Monday to Friday, 1 pm to 5 pm on Wednesday, 4 to 5 pm on Saturdays, and 9:30 to 10:30 am on Sundays.) I will not be in the confessional. I will be up near the tabernacle and a prie-dieu (kneeler) will be placed two metres away for you to kneel at and make your confession. This location will give you sufficient privacy to ensure no one else will hear your confession.

If you are sick, frail or elderly I would encourage you not to venture out at all. Several of our wonderful parishioners have offered to grocery shop or run errands for those members of our parish who are most at risk and should not be going out. Please contact Ann Lyng at 613-546-5521 ext. 5 and she will make the necessary connections.

Pope Francis encouraged all of us to join him at 4 pm today in praying the rosary. The priests here in the rectory all joined him. I would encourage each of you in each of your households to pray the Holy Rosary daily, either alone or with your family. It is so important we increase our prayer at this time. I am attaching three beautiful prayers that have specifically been composed to intercede for an end to COVID-19. Please pray each of them each day.

I will be praying for your peace in this time of anxiety, and for strength in this time of seeming helplessness, and for courage in this time of fear.

May Our Blessed Saviour bless each of you and all of your loved ones.

In Christ

Father Shawn