

Dear Saint Maria Goretti Parishioners.

I hope you and your families are healthy and safe. Even though we now have outdoor mass with the appropriate safety precautions and limitations. I miss connecting with everyone and seeing you at Mass. I know we are all doing our best and I pray for strength and courage for our Saint Maria Goretti family during these uncertain times. Since we are not able to gather as we normally would, I wanted to send some updates on what is happening in our parish.

In spite of the difficulties you are facing, I wanted to extend my most heartfelt thanks for your continued generosity over the past months. As I am sure you know, even though we do not have our normal programs, the bills continue to come in order to keep the Church and property running. I know we all are encountering challenges and am grateful you are making Saint Maria Goretti Church a priority and giving what you can. If you should need more envelopes or would like assistance setting up online giving to automatically deduct your donation from your checking account, please contact the Rectory Office at 562-425-7459 we will be happy to support you however we can. You can also do a contactless drop off of your donation at the Church by putting it through the secure front-door mail slot.

Many of you also have been asking about celebrations of the Sacraments. Confirmation and First Communion are on hold until further notice. We want to exercise extreme caution bringing our parish together in large gatherings. Knowing how long our families prepared for these Sacraments and how important they are, we also want it to be inclusive of their family members and special friends who want to be present for the celebration. Baptisms, Marriage Celebrations, and Funeral Services are subject to the safety limitations as other gatherings, if you should have a special circumstance, please contact the Rectory Office to discuss how we may proceed.

Finally, as you may be aware, we held our first outdoor Mass last weekend between the Church and Rectory. I have to say it went better than I expected. We had a few tents and there seemed to be enough shade for us to gather comfortably with appropriate spacing. The Missionaries also held Mass outside in their backyard and I hear that went well too. We will continue to have outdoor Mass for now until circumstances dictate otherwise. I thank you for your

patience, flexibility and support. I know it is different for us and it is not perfect, but we need to faithfully keep pushing on doing the best we can.

Many times we have reflected on the reality that our Church is not a building. We are the Living Body of Christ., with Jesus our head and ourselves as members, united with Him and with one another by the gift of the Holy Spirit. These days are a chance for us to see how this works. Let's continue to pray for one another as we continue to live in faith during a difficult time.

With much love and seeking intercession of St. Maria Goretti, our Nonna Marietta, I remain sincerely yours in Christ

Fr. John Schiavone