

Just a few words before we begin Mass this afternoon.

First of all, my prayers and the prayers of our entire community go out to all who are suffering at this time. The sick, the dying, those who have died and their families. It is God alone that can bring peace and healing.

Yesterday, Governor Murphy signed an executive order which places further restrictions on residents of New Jersey. These restrictions as well as a memo to Pastors from Bishop Sullivan have an impact on Christ Our Light and the other parishes of the Camden Diocese.

Only the resident clergy and those who live in the rectory may be present for the daily celebration of Mass with the exception of one technician who can film or livestream the Mass

The Parish and School offices are closed. And no parish or school activities will be held. Parish and School staff will all continue to work from home. I have asked them to check their phone and voice mail messages on a regular basis and respond to all in a timely manner.

Mrs. Webb has done a fantastic job of communicating with the staff and parents of the students in our school to set up remote and on line learning and will continue to do so. We can learn a lot from her.

All Funeral, weddings, baptisms and other gatherings are now prohibited by the Governor's order and by Bishop Sullivan's directives.

Regarding funerals, please know that a public memorial Mass can be scheduled for a later date. However, should parishioners need to bury a loved one immediately, arrangements can be made through the funeral director. A priest will come to the cemetery to celebrate the burial rites. The priest will also celebrate a private Mass without a congregation on the day of the burial for the deceased person.

Regarding weddings, please contact the priest planning to celebrate your wedding to discuss specifics.

A decision regarding the celebration of liturgies for the Sacred Triduum and Easter will be made at a later date.

All other parish and school related activities are cancelled until further notice.

Organizations like Christ Our Light and other charities and nonprofits are on the frontline responding to our neighbors and communities in need during this crisis. We also want to continue to pay our employees for as long as we possibly can. However, we are risking catastrophic damage from evaporating revenue, new and rising demands for assistance and major disruptions in charitable giving. If you can, please continue to be faithful to your weekly church offering by either sending it in in the mail or signing up on our website for on-line giving.

In closing, I believe in two important truths:

1. We can learn something very powerful about God, about ourselves and about what it truly means to be a follower of Christ more honestly in difficult times as opposed to easy times.

2. And 2, everyone working together, being kind to one another, caring for those most in need, loving and forgiving each other, can call upon God to lead us out of the darkness and into the light.

Thank you.