



DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Office of Communications

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bishop Felipe Estévez Provides Update on Coronavirus Response for Catholics in the Diocese of St. Augustine

Jacksonville, Fla. – Bishop Felipe Estévez has announced new liturgical accommodations to limit the spread of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) among the faith community of the 17-county region of the Diocese of St. Augustine. His response follows:

“Out of pastoral concern for the health and wellbeing of our Catholic community, and by my authority as the bishop to dispense from universal ecclesiastical laws, I dispense from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass:

- All who are sick and those who are caring for them
- Those who because of age or infirmity are at higher risk for contracting the coronavirus
- Those who have been exposed to the coronavirus because of travel or other circumstances.

This dispensation is valid for as long as any of the above-referenced conditions continue. And to further protect public health and calm fears, I also dispense all the Catholic faithful from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass during the remaining weeks of March. This dispensation will allow any who are concerned to stay home and avoid public gatherings of 10 or more people in cooperation with civil authorities. As this continues to be a fluid situation, additional updates will be available on the diocesan website (dosafl.com), social media, and news releases to local media.”

The coronavirus is causing hardship for our people and our parishes, both spiritually and financially. Our churches will remain open during the day for the faithful who want to visit and pray. Your parish brings you the light of Christ. Please help keep the light shining by giving through your parish’s online program, app, or mail an offering to your parish office.

Catholic Charities Bureau continues to put faith into action to serve the most vulnerable in our community. For emergency financial assistance, call 2-1-1 in Jacksonville for more details. For operation hours and services in Gainesville, Jacksonville, Lake City, and St. Augustine visit www.ccbdosa.org. To provide financial assistance for members of our community who are affected, send checks to Catholic Charities Bureau, Inc., 3100 University Blvd., S., Suite 121, Jacksonville, FL 32216.

Bishop Estévez has asked us to pray for all those who have been affected by the coronavirus, and in a special way for those who have died due to this world-wide pandemic.

For online resources, visit: www.dosafl.com.

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