

March 17th, 2020

Hello Everyone,

FF Class suspended but the Sacrament of Reconciliation is still being offered.

We wanted to let you know that Fr. Peter and Fr. Chuck Fischer will be here tomorrow evening, March 18th, to hear confessions for any Faith Formation participants, (adults included), who would like to celebrate this Sacrament.

You are welcome to arrive through door "B" between 6:15 and 7:15 pm on Wednesday, March 18th.

Blessings to you,
The Faith Formation Staff

Visit our website: stmmagdalen.org

Dear Friends in Christ,

Every year, the season of Lent reconnects us with the deepest thirst of the human heart: to know that God loves us, to know that God is present as we face our trials. When unexpected things happen, they can reveal to us the strength of our faith, or its fragility; the depth of our hope, or its frailty; the vibrancy of our love, or its feebleness. During this season of Lent we are facing an unprecedented trial with the COVID-19 virus. This pandemic calls for extraordinary measures to protect the common good, especially the most vulnerable among us.

I am grateful for those of you who observed my directive to stay home last Sunday and gather as a family for prayer and to watch the Mass via live broadcast. We rely on our faith in times such as these. I understand how difficult it is to not have access to the Eucharist on a Sunday, but we must continue to cooperate with orders issued by government and health care officials. Hopefully, our efforts will slow the spread of this virus so that we can once again gather together as quickly as possible.

Governor Whitmer's most recent executive order became effective today, March 17; it prohibits all gatherings of more than 50 people in a shared indoor space. Therefore, the Diocese of Grand Rapids has decided to temporarily suspend ALL public Masses and all other liturgical and devotional services, effective immediately, through Palm Sunday, April 5, 2020. With this suspension, all Catholics within the territory of the Diocese of Grand Rapids are granted a dispensation from their obligation of attending Sunday Mass through April 5. Baptisms, weddings, and funerals may continue to be celebrated outside of Mass with no more than 50 people in attendance. Our March 26 evening of penance, "The Light is ON for You" as well as individual confession times may continue as scheduled.

Our Catholic schools remain closed and all parish faith formation classes remain suspended until at least April 5 in accordance with Governor Whitmer's earlier mandate.

These have been difficult, but necessary decisions to make. The diocesan leadership team has been thoughtful and prudent in providing assistance to me. Science and recent experience have proven that participation in public gatherings significantly increases the risk of spreading this virus. As Catholics we must

stand in solidarity with others and work together for the common good. We must recognize the value of every life and work together to protect all life.

During Lent we focus on the penitential practices of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. This time away from the reception of the Eucharist can help us gain a greater awareness of the importance the Eucharist has in our lives. May our spiritual hunger make us yearn for the time when we will be able to gather around the table of our Lord once again!

You are encouraged to unite yourself with Jesus during this time by making a spiritual Communion. I invite families to use this time to pray together. Let us renew our efforts to turn to the Lord. Spiritual resources can be found on the diocesan website, grdiocese.org. Our churches will remain open so that individuals and families may come for private prayer to experience the Lord's presence in the Blessed Sacrament.

Our priests will continue to celebrate Mass each day without a congregation. Christ remains present to us in various ways, especially in the Eucharist. Our hope is in God who promises to journey with us. May our love, our care, for one another be a reminder, and a proof, that yes, indeed, God is in our midst!

Let us continue to pray for all who are affected by COVID-19, for our health care officials and medical professionals who are working diligently to protect us during this time.

Let us turn to the calm and reassuring presence of our Blessed Mother during this time of uncertainty:

Holy Virgin of Guadalupe,
Queen of the Angels and Mother of the Americas.
We fly to you today as your beloved children.
We ask you to intercede for us with your Son,
as you did at the wedding in Cana.

Pray for us, loving Mother,
and gain for our nation and world,
and for all our families and loved ones,
the protection of your holy angels,
that we may be spared the worst of this illness.

For those already afflicted,
we ask you to obtain the grace of healing and deliverance.
Hear the cries of those who are vulnerable and fearful,
wipe away their tears and help them to trust.

In this time of trial and testing,
teach all of us in the Church to love one another and to be patient and kind.
Help us to bring the peace of Jesus to our land and to our hearts.

We come to you with confidence,
knowing that you truly are our compassionate mother,
health of the sick and cause of our joy.

Shelter us under the mantle of your protection,
keep us in the embrace of your arms,
help us always to know the love of your Son, Jesus. Amen.

Prayer of Archbishop Jose Gomez of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, and president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak
Bishop of Grand Rapids

March 25th, 2020

Hello Everyone,

More information from us.

We would like to let you know that even though the office is closed until April 13th due to the Coronavirus, the staff will be checking their emails and voicemails from home, so if you have any questions or concerns during this time please let us know.

We will continue to keep you, our parish family, in our prayers during this very difficult time.

Many Blessings,
St. Mary Magdalen Staff

Visit our website: stmmagdalen.org

Hello to our Faith Formation Family,

Parents of Elementary & MS FF students, please watch your emails for lesson ideas and outlines for your children. They will be coming from either Molly Wisdom or your child's catechists. Students preparing for Sacraments will receive their information by email or the USPS. Adults, please visit the diocesan website for ideas on how to remain engaged in formation. Blessings during this challenging time.

Molly W.

Youth Ministry is live and online! Please check the website: <https://stmmagdalen.org/youth/>

or follow us on social media for news and information about virtual programming during this time. We have pages for Middle School, High School, and Young Adult. These pages on the website will be youth ministry's primary communication during this time, so please check back frequently. You can also email Allison with any questions or concerns.

Praying for all of our students and their families during this time.

Stay safe and stay sane!

Allison H.

March 26th, 2020

WATCH LIVE on FRIDAY: Join Pope Francis on Friday, March 27 for a special Urbi et Orbi blessing from St. Peter's Square. The prayer and blessing will be broadcast on the Vatican News website (<https://www.vaticannews.va/es.html>) at 1 p.m. EDT (6 p.m. Rome time)

Those participating in the live stream will have the opportunity to gain a Plenary Indulgence by meeting the additional requirements described here:

PLENARY INDULGENCE

The prescribed work:

- United spiritually through the media to the Pope's special prayer and blessing on Friday, March 27
- The recitation of the Holy Rosary
- The pious practice of the Way of the Cross
- Or some other form of devotion, such as reciting the Creed, the Lord's Prayer or a pious invocation to the Blessed Virgin Mary

The Usual Conditions:

- A spirit detached from sin
- Sacramental confession (as soon as possible)
- Eucharistic communion (as soon as possible)
- Prayer for the Holy Father's intentions

[Watch Live](#)

In this unique time, the staff of St Mary Magdalen would like to share some of the things we continue to be thankful for.

- That my kitchen window faces the east, because every morning that it is clear enough to see the sunrise I feel that God is saying “Good Morning” to me and reminding me to slow down and enjoy the beauty he has given us. -Michelle
- I am looking forward to good old yummy Fish Frys. -Tim
- I am thankful for communication through phone, internet, and TV and for the teachers working extra hard to help their students learn online during this time. Of course, I am deeply thankful for everyone on the front line caring for patients and others affected by this virus- medical staff, priests, first responders, and many more. -Emily
- At this time of fear and hopelessness, to whom shall I turn but God. My prayer and my heart go to those who are suffering because of this Covid - 19 pandemic, especially those who are on the front line: doctors, nurses and medical personnel. I thank God for protecting all our parishioners safe.-Sister Mai
- My out of town friends, who have been calling and checking in frequently. It's wonderful to have the time to chat at length with them about what's happening and just about how their lives have been recently. - Allison
- I am thankful for my caring coworkers. That not only try to keep each other safe, but also help encourage and counsel each other. When we are having

Here is a list of things we are looking forward to, what are some of the things you are looking forward to?

- I am thankful for so much including the season of spring, telephones, and take-out restaurants. -Tim
- I look forward to sitting in the warm sunshine on the beach at Lake Michigan and many, many more outings now planned from being inside. I also look forward to the first time we can joyfully celebrate mass together, and my daughter's First Holy Communion. - Emily
- May He strengthen our faith and show His mercy toward us. I pray that this global crisis end soon so that we might resume our worship together. -Sister Mai
- Having all my children and friends over for a cookout. -Michelle
- Doing a puzzle with my roommates on Saturday. -Allison
- SUMMER! My summer was cut short last year, so I cannot wait for picnics, volleyball, swimming, all of it! -Laura
- What am I looking forward to. Being able to hug someone or shake their hand. Touch is so important to us. Also I'm looking forward to getting back into the kitchen to make some meatloaf that everyone loves. -Ruth

Please remember our Parish still needs your weekly or monthly contributions. You can mail in your contribution envelopes or you can make a one time donation by clicking on the box below.

Thank you

[To Donate](#)

tough times, we are always there for each other. -Laura

- Like we all are I'm grateful for my family. Michael, like the archangel, is a great protector and gentleman. He is my rock. My daughters are different as night and day, but they both are amazing moms and are teaching their children to be great people. Love them both. I'm grateful for the people I work with, both staff and volunteers. They are willing to support others and give of themselves constantly. I'm grateful to God for giving me my talent to cook. At this time when people do take-out and eat restaurants I'm so glad I can make a good homemade meal. (Am willing to share.)-Ruth
- I hesitate to narrow my gratitude to one thing, as there is actually much to be grateful for even in this trying time. But I would like to say that I am grateful for all the people who are going out of their way to smile and wave as they walk by with their pets. It seems to me that this is a choice they are making to bring joy to others and remind themselves that even in the most challenging times, simple human kindness can lift a heart and bolster a spirit. As we fill our thoughts with concerns, and action plans, these simple gestures prompt a simple and joyful response, and that I am grateful for. -Molly

April 3rd 2020

We made it through another week! The staff at St Mary Magdalen would like all of you to know you are in our prayers and we appreciate all your patience as we make our way through this unusual time. Please know that even with the office closed we are doing our best to answer voicemails and emails, so if you have any questions, concerns, or prayer requests please continue to let us know.

With the news of the schools closing for the remainder of the year, we are working on finalizing plans for the Faith Formation programs. Please check your email and our website for updates.

For Youth Ministry updates, parents and students should follow St. Mary Magdalen youth ministry on Instagram and Facebook or check the youth ministry calendar on the website, which is found on the main youth ministry page. If you have any questions please contact Allison, ahawkins@stmmagdalen.org

Worship resources for all parishioners, including links to the televised Mass and adoration, are available on the front page of our website under "Upcoming Events"

[Visit our website](#)

Here are a couple additional links the staff have found helpful.

From Liturgy of the Word:

https://npm.org/wp-content/uploads/Sample-Holy-Week-Celebrations-of-the-Word_-2020-mjp-1.pdf

Also, recommended by KEPHA, the group that coordinates the men's conference, a virtual conference this weekend:

https://www.virtualcatholicconference.com/?r_done=1

Please continue to support our parish with your prayers and regular contributions. Your envelopes can be mailed to the church or click the link below to go to our online contribution page.

Praying for the health of everyone and that we will be safely together soon,
The staff of St Mary Magdalen Parish

[Contributions](#)

April 8th, 2020

Hello All,

As we continue as a faith community to adjust to the challenges of our current situation we have some sad, if not unexpected news; our Faith Formation year which was scheduled to end on April 29th, has come to an early end due to COVID-19. We are hoping to schedule a time to gather, once it is safe, to pick up student resources, say our summer good byes and maybe play a little BINGO.

Please stay safe and healthy until we gather together again and know that you are in our prayers and in our hearts.

Blessings to you,
The Faith Formations Staff

April 10th, 2020

Well, here we are, in this very different year, in the middle of the Easter Triduum. While this is not the Easter we are use to, it can still be just as moving and important as ever. Our Bishop has made it so we can participate in the Masses from home and there are many liturgical and devotional options available online. Please join us, as a family, in celebrating the Passion of the Lord at 3 pm on Fox17, Easter Vigil tomorrow night at 9 pm on Facebook or at GRdiocese.org, and Easter: The Resurrection of the Lord on Sunday at 10 am on Fox17.

Today we unite ourselves to Jesus' suffering and death for our salvation. To remain united in prayer throughout the day, we offer these resources, from Magnificat, to aid your reflection and meditation.

[The Celebration of the Word](#)

[The Way of the Cross](#)

[The Way of the Cross-Audio](#)

[The Seven Last Words of Christ](#)

[The Way of Our Sorrowful Mother](#)

Dear Friends in Christ,

We have continued to see the grave impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on our cities, in our state, and across the world. Mindful of the current circumstances and to continue our efforts to protect the common good, I write today to announce that the Diocese of Grand Rapids has extended its cancellation of ALL public Masses and all other liturgical and devotional services, effective immediately, through April 30, 2020. With this suspension, all Catholics within the territory of the Diocese of Grand Rapids are granted a dispensation from their obligation of attending Sunday Mass through April 30. Priests are to continue to celebrate Mass each day without a congregation. Priests may not invite the laity to attend their private Mass.

The celebration of the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. I fully understand the gravity of these extensions in the life of the Church and the great sacrifices everyone is making without public Masses. This decision, along with the many others made before it, has not been undertaken without prudent consideration. While we cannot be gathered together to celebrate the Eucharistic feast, we are still receiving the Lord's graces.

You are encouraged to unite yourself with Jesus during this time by making a spiritual Communion during the televised and livestreamed Masses. Families are invited to use this time to pray together. Let us renew our efforts to turn to the Lord. Spiritual resources can be found on the diocesan website, gdiocese.org.

I am deeply grateful for our priests who have risen to the challenge to connect with their parishioners in new ways. They are evermore keeping their ordination promise to "implore God's mercy upon the people entrusted to their care by observing the command to pray without ceasing."

I wish to profoundly thank our health care professionals – doctors, nurses, technicians, administrators, and support staff – all of you – have demonstrated courage, compassion, and remarkable professional care in a time of growing crisis. We are blessed by your ministry and witness!

I would also like to commend the response of the Catholic faithful to heed these orders designed to protect the common good, and for the many heartfelt efforts to check on your family and neighbors. "...Let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth." (1 John 3:18)

My directives on parish life issued on March 23 are extended through April 30, 2020. These directives should continue to guide the ministry of our Catholic parishes and schools.

During this extension, exceptions for infant baptisms and weddings only will be made. If celebrated, the sacraments must adhere to the following guidelines.

Infant baptism must be celebrated outside Mass with the following conditions in place:

- Baptisms are to be held individually. Those present for the baptism are to be limited to the minister, infant, parents, and godparents.
- Contact between the minister and infant is to be as minimal as the rite allows.
- Social distance is to be maintained insofar as possible.
- It is recommended that adult participants wear face masks.
- A small basin of holy water should be blessed and used for each individual baptism, and then discarded appropriately.

Weddings should be postponed if possible. Wedding receptions are not to be held on parish property. If a wedding is to be celebrated, then it must be celebrated outside Mass with the following conditions in place:

- Those present for the wedding are to be limited to the minister, the couple being married, and two witnesses.
- Contact between the minister and couple is to be as minimal as the rite allows.
- Social distance is to be maintained insofar as possible.

The prior directives for funerals remain in place. And are as follows:

- Funerals are to be celebrated without Mass with only immediate family members present, limiting those gathered to 10.
 1. Alternately, a committal service at the cemetery may be celebrated outdoors, with the appropriate social distancing guidelines in place, with a memorial Mass to be celebrated at a later date.

For up-to-date information about the Diocese of Grand Rapids' response to the COVID-19 pandemic, visit <http://bit.ly/GRdioceseCOVID19Updates>.

Please join us in praying for the remarkable doctors and health care workers who are treating those who are sick, and for front-line employees who are keeping us all safe. Please pray for the sick and the deceased, may they feel the loving presence of Christ, and for all who are impacted by this virus. Relying on the intercession of our Blessed Mother, we pray for an end to this pandemic. As we celebrate the sacred mysteries of this Holy Week, we trust in the hope found in the Lord's glorious Resurrection.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak
Bishop of Grand Rapids

April 11th, 2020

Easter Vigil 9pm Saturday

Happy Easter!

Please join us tonight at 9 pm for the Easter Vigil or tomorrow at 10 am for Easter Mass on Fox17

Easter Greetings

Please click the link above to see Easter Greetings from all of the Office Staff. We miss all of you and continue to pray that we will be together soon.

April 17th, 2020

SPRING HAS SPRUNG

As Bishop Walkowiak has encouraged us; we should continue to keep the Lord's Day holy and unite ourselves with Jesus during this time by making a spiritual Communion. He invites families to use this time to pray and grow together. Let us renew our efforts to turn to the Lord.

Because we want to encourage you to explore your Catholic faith at home, our diocese is partnering with the Augustine Institute to give you a FREE 40-day subscription to FORMED – an online platform that provides the best Catholic movies, programs, audio books and talks, all at your fingertips, on your Roku, Apple TV, web browser, or FORMED iOS and Android apps.

FORMED is a great way to help you and your entire family understand, live and share the Catholic faith during these times. Visit <https://formed.org/signup> and enter “Faith At Home Grand Rapids” for access to faith-fueling, inspiring and informative stories, teaching and more.

Additional resources may be found on the diocesan website and Facebook page:

Holy Week at Home

Spiritual Resources

Feel free to share this link and information with your friends and family!

Thank you,

The Staff of St Mary Magdalen

The Power of prayer is so important especially now. We have a group that will pray for you, your loved

ones, friends or neighbors. If you have a prayer request please email me at:

mmason@stmmagdalen.org and I will pass it onto our group.

**Thank you,
Michelle**

Flowers for Mother's Day and to brighten your spring and summer will once again be offered through Youth Ministry and Ludemas. **Please see this page of the website for options and pricing.** If you would like to order flowers or if you have any questions, please contact Allison at 616-455-9310 x104 or at ahawkins@stmmagdalen.org by Wednesday, April 29th. We will determine the best practices for delivery as we get closer to Mother's Day. Thank you for supporting Youth Ministry and local business!

Our parish staff has started a blog on our website! **Click here** to see our humble beginnings, and check back throughout the week as we share bits and pieces of our lives working from home and in quarantine. We are so grateful to have the opportunity to further connect with you!

Thank you,
Allison

We all are doing our part and staying home at this time. But the need for blood never goes away. Our next blood drive is scheduled for May 3. In accordance with the guidelines that the CDC has set it will be important to have an appointment. Please visit their website to make an appointment. Be a hero for someone and donate.

April 25th will be our next Feeding America truck. Last month we changed the way we handed out the food and it worked well. With a couple of adjustments we will do this the same way. Please consider helping and pray for dry weather.

At this time we are still planning to have our festival in July. By that time we will be ready for a celebration. While we are in our own homes, staying safe, we continue to plan for next year.

Thanks,
Ruth

April 24th

Hello Everyone,

Please see our Website for the latest letter from Bishop Walkowiak

This time of year is when we show our appreciation for all that our volunteers do for us. Unfortunately because of the times we are in, we will have to postpone our Appreciation Dinner until a later date. In the meantime please go to our website stmmagdalen.org and read the Thank you's from the staff.

Help is needed this Saturday, April 25 with the Feeding America truck. Our procedures will be similar to last month so extra help is needed. Please remember to dress for the weather as we are outside. Volunteers need to be there by 8:15 am.

Would like to give a shout out to **Red Storm Cares**. This is the East Kentwood Robotics Club that has supplied us with 35 face shields to use at our Feeding America truck on Saturday, April 25.

Red Storm Cares has used their 3D printers to make over 1000 face shields and bands. You are awesome. THANK YOU.

Blood Drive:

During this time of unknown questions. One thing is still known. The need for blood is always there. We will still have our May 3 blood drive in the BAC. To limit the number of people at any one time please sign up at https://donate.michigan.versiti.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/126595.

Jersey Mike subs is donating 20% of their sales this weekend (4/25 & 4/26) to Feeding America. Please consider picking a sub or 2 this weekend to support Feeding America who helps put food on the table of those less fortunate. <https://www.jerseymikes.com/>

Flowers for Mother's Day and to brighten your spring and summer will once again be offered through Youth Ministry and Ludemas. **Please see the website for options and pricing.** If you would like to order flowers or if you have any questions, please contact Allison at 616-455-9310 x104 or at ahawkins@stmmagdalen.org by Wednesday, April 29th. We will determine the best practices for delivery as we get closer to Mother's Day. Thank you for supporting Youth Ministry and local business!

The Asian Community Outreach Group is offering \$15 gift cards for families who complete the 2020 Census and are a part of historically under-counted populations (such as minorities and new immigrants, particularly Asian-American populations such as Burmese, Philippines, Vietnamese, Nepalese, etc.). Any family who has completed the Census and is a part of an under-counted population can contact Allison with a screenshot or a confirmation code to receive their gift card. If you or someone you know is a part of this population and has not completed the Census, this is a great time to do so! If you have any questions, please contact Allison via email at ahawkins@stmmagdalen.org. or call and leave a message on her voice mail (455-9310 ext. 104)Thank you.

Please stay safe and know that you are in our prayers.

The Parish Staff