



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement re: COVID-19 Developments and Sunday Mass Obligation

CROOKSTON, MINNESOTA, March 13, 2020 – State and federal agency reports regarding the COVID-19 pandemic continue to be monitored. Today Governor Walz declared a Peacetime Emergency for Minnesota and President Trump declared a National Emergency.

You are encouraged to review [“Strategies to Slow the Spread of COVID-19 in Minnesota”](#) from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). Key points for Clergy and Church Personnel to consider include:

- Canceling or postponing large events where 250 people or more would gather, including but not limited to: concerts, conferences, performances or sporting events.
- Canceling or postponing smaller events (fewer than 250 people) held in venues that do not allow social distancing of 6 feet per person. This includes gatherings in crowded auditoriums, rooms or other venues.
- Canceling or postponing events with more than 10 people where most participants are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, including gatherings at retirement facilities, assisted living facilities, developmental homes, or support groups for people with health conditions.
- The MDH encourages K–12 schools to remain open unless directed to close by MDH.

Bishop Michael J. Hoeppner gives a dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass (CCC 2192) for the remainder of March. Diocese of Crookston parishes will continue to celebrate public Masses as scheduled and all liturgical precautions announced on March 10 and [updated March 12](#) will be followed; however, if the faithful decide that gathering for Sunday Mass would constitute a risk to themselves or others, they have the freedom not to attend. A reminder that Sunday is still the Lord’s Day and should be kept holy. One can keep the day holy by viewing Mass on television, listening to Mass on the radio, making a spiritual Communion, praying the Liturgy of the Hours, praying the Rosary, or another devotion.

Additional Diocese of Crookston COVID-19 updates and impacts will continue to be published at www.crookston.org/statements.

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