



Memorandum for Distribution

From: Chancery, Diocese of Gallup

To: Pastors, Administrators and other leaders of the faithful

Date/Time: March 13, 2020 at 1:30 PM MDST

Subject: Health Update

The following segments present information and directives for the personnel and faithful members of the Diocese of Gallup as approved by His Excellency, James Seán Wall, Bishop of Gallup. Please check the Website of the Diocese regularly where we intend to post daily updates on the response to the current disease threats. Please review the directives released on March 12, 2020 since the following may alter or add to those instructions.

Obligation to attend Sunday Mass

Effective immediately, and until further notice, Bishop James Wall has dispensed the faithful of the Diocese of Gallup from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass. Despite the suspension of the obligation to attend Sunday Mass, all regularly scheduled Masses will remain open to the public for those who wish to attend.

This information must be distributed by all usual means to the faithful. Pastoral encouragement should be included for a proper Christian response of prayer and spiritual communion during this stressful time.

Pastors of large parishes should discern the option to increase the number of celebrations of the Mass over a weekend. The purpose would be to distribute the attendance over more Masses, if this is possible. The current goal advise by New Mexico authorities is to keep the number of persons gathered under 100. Our continued worship of God and prayers are part of an effective response to the coronavirus that threatens us.

Schools Closures

The catholic schools of the Diocese of Gallup in the State of New Mexico will close at the end of the school day today, March 13, 2020 and remain closed for at least 3 weeks. This matches the actions of the New Mexico public schools. Arizona schools are not currently affected. Specific directives follow:

1. All diocese of Gallup schools will follow the response procedure of their public-school counterparts. All our schools on the New Mexico side of the diocese should follow immediately the directive of the State Government and close for the next three (3) weeks.

2. All our schools on the Arizona side of the diocese should follow directives county-by-county as directed by Arizona State government. Close when the schools in your county are asked to close. also, follow other relevant recommendations made by local or state health departments.
3. All our schools should gear up and implement alternative instruction/learning plans and be prepared for make-ups as we do even on days of inclement weather (snow days).
4. Refer to stipulations in our policy handbook number 5215 regarding emergency closures.
5. Please check out CDC website and follow all guidelines about cleaning of classrooms and entire school for the safe return of students and staff.

CCD (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine) Classes

The CCD and religious education instruction classes for children are suspended now for the entire Diocese of Gallup until further notice. Currently, adult classes are still permitted.

Prayer for the Day

Heavenly Father grant us your holy wisdom today to discern correct actions as a church and as individuals in response to the invisible threat in our midst. Help us to remember that you walk with us. Subdue our pride, calm our fears and guide our decisions by your love, directing our thoughts and deeds to the well-being of others. + Amen.

Let us keep one another in prayer in these trying times. May God protect us all His children.

Respectfully,

Dcn. Randolph Copeland
Chancellor
Diocese of Gallup