

DIocese ISSUES ADVISORY ON CORONAVIRUS CONCERNS

With federal health officials issuing recent warnings about the potential spread of the coronavirus in the United States, and news coming in from around the globe about extreme measures to stem the spread, the Diocese of Trenton has issued the following instructions:



The Diocese has always advised the faithful that sickness is a valid reason not to attend Mass or other Church gatherings where large groups assemble. At Mass, no member of the faithful is obliged: (1) to shake hands at the sign of peace; (2) to receive the Precious Blood of Christ from the chalice; (3) to receive the Body of Christ on the tongue unless that is his/her preference.

With the concerns about the coronavirus, the faithful are encouraged to take all the same precautions they would follow regarding the flu. Use normal good judgment. If you are sick or have flu-like symptoms, stay home. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is broadcast on several television channels, and the sick can make a "spiritual communion" until they return to good health.

For more information about the coronavirus threat, go to TrentonMonitor.com/coronavirus.

CENSUS CRITICAL TO UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

As the nation gears up for the 2020 U.S. Census, a process that unfolds in most states in mid-March and continues through this July, the stakes are high for all to participate. Church leaders remind the faithful that crucial decisions about government-funded programs and representation are made based on updated census data.

James King, interim director of the New Jersey Catholic Conference, emphasized that in addition to ensuring proper funding amounts for services, census information also determines the number of seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Rep-



resentatives and is used to redraw congressional and state legislative districts. After the 2010 census, he pointed out, New Jersey lost a seat in the House of Representatives.

The loss of representation and the loss of funding negatively affects citizens, especially those from underserved and vulnerable populations, stressed Brenda Rascher, diocesan executive director of Catholic Social Services.

"We need people to understand that the state has lost funding in the past because of the census. So if we don't get it right, it will be 10 years before we can fix it," she said.

To read more about the critical importance that the upcoming U.S. Census holds for the low-income and marginalized communities served within the Diocese of Trenton, go to TrentonMonitor.com and click on NEWS>WORLD & NATION.

FIVE PARISHES TO KEEP DOORS OPEN FOR 24 HOURS FOR THE LORD

Five parishes in the Diocese will welcome all who wish to participate in 24 Hours for the Lord, a Lenten devotion planned in churches around the world March 20 and 21. The local parishes will open their doors for 24 hours, during which time visitors can pray before the Blessed Sacrament in Eucharistic Adoration, seek the Sacrament of Reconciliation, join in healing services or spend time in prayer.

Twenty-four Hours for the Lord began in 2018 when Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M., asked parishes to join with Catholics throughout the world in the initiative that



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was established by Pope Francis.

Father Jeffrey Kegley, pastor of St. Mary Parish, Middletown, explained, "In participating in 24 Hours for the Lord, a person will encounter the love and mercy of Jesus Christ as their sins are forgiven. After Confession, people again have another opportunity to encounter Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration. Both Confession and Adoration provide an amazing opportunity for healing of souls."

Along with St. Mary Parish, the other parishes hosting 24 Hours for the Lord are Nativity, Fair Haven; Mary, Mother of the Church, Bordentown; Holy Cross, Rumson, and St. Michael, West End.

For times and other information, go to TrentonMonitor.com and search for 24 Hours for the Lord.

► DIOCESE'S NEW VOCATIONS PROGRAM INVITES MEN WHO ARE 'CALLED BY NAME'

Thirty young men from around the Diocese gathered in St. Robert Bellarmine Co-Cathedral, Freehold, in mid-February as part of a new vocations initiative known as "Called By Name." Initiated in November, the program asked parishioners to submit the names of men whom they believed might be invited to consider a priestly vocation. The men



took part in the Vigil Mass celebrated by Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M.

"Today, at this Mass, we recognize the fact that God, our creator, is calling out to us – calling us to choices that help us fulfill his plan and our human destiny," Bishop O'Connell said in his homily. "The Lord is not simply calling out in general — we are 'called by name' by the One who made us.

"Every one of us has been 'called by name,'" the Bishop continued. "Every one of us has been given the freedom to follow God's call. Every one of us has been given the opportunity to choose the things that will help us follow that call wherever it may lead in life ..."

For reporting and a photo gallery from this new effort to foster priestly vocations in the Diocese, go to TrentonMonitor.com and search for "Called By Name."

► ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A JOB? INFORMATION? EVENTS?

Here is a quick guide on how to find the information you've been looking for:

- If you've ever wanted to work for the Church, stay connected with the Diocese's job listing at **<https://dioceseoftrenton.org/employment>**
- Want to know what's happening around the Diocese? Visit **TrentonMonitor.com** and click on **EVENTS**. You also can post an event for your parish or Catholic school.
- For regular updates from the Diocese, visit the blog, **OUR DIOCESE TODAY**

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