

Dear Parishioners:

I echo our local Church leader, Archbishop Alexander K. Sample, who started a March 16 Coronavirus update this way: “This is by far one of the most difficult communications I have ever written because of the impact it will have on the spiritual and faith lives of so many of us.”

As you likely know by now, in that update the archbishop announced—“with a very heavy heart”—the cancellation of all public Masses in the Archdiocese of Portland beginning March 17 through April 14, 2020. At the same time, he dispensed “all of the faithful from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation for the same period of time.”

As Catholics and citizens, he explained, we should want to participate in every effort to limit, or “[flatten the curve](#)” of, the spread of the virus. Pursuing that goal means cooperating with the new legal limits and suggested guidelines of the State of Oregon, in line with guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the White House, regarding the size of public gatherings.

I call your attention to the detail that the CDC has especially called for organizations to keep gatherings from exceeding *10 people* if those organizations serve and/or have a membership with many in the high-risk groups for the virus. Our parish, of course, fits that description. For a bit of perspective, around midday on March 18 I checked a Catholic news website and saw that well-over 100 U.S. dioceses and archdioceses have instituted similar cancellation policies.

Look for an email from me soon on resources and materials for nurturing faith, hope and love.

Your pastor and brother in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fr. Chuck". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Fr. Chuck