



Facing the rapidly evolving coronavirus pandemic, the Most Rev. James F. Checchio, Bishop of Metuchen, announced today that while Masses in the Diocese of Metuchen will continue to be celebrated, the faithful are not obligated to attend until the weekend of April 4 – 5, when the situation will be re-evaluated as circumstances unfold.

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Metuchen are regularly monitoring the progression of the spread of the coronavirus and the circumstances for each school will continue to be re-evaluated on a case-by-case basis, following the practice of their local school districts. All individuals are encouraged to follow the guidance of their local public health officials and civil authorities.

“Regardless if the Catholic faithful of our diocese choose to attend Mass, this is an unprecedented time in our nation and in our world, a time for much needed hope, and above all prayer,” said Bishop Checchio. “If anything, this is a time for more prayer, not less,” he added.

For Catholics, who are called to build up the Kingdom of God through the Church – both physical and universal – the impacts of the coronavirus are pushing many of them into uncharted territory.

“When we attend Mass, we are nourished by the body and blood of Jesus Christ through the Eucharist,” said Bishop Checchio. “So, for those who prayerfully discern not to be present for the liturgy, it is important that they make a spiritual communion in some other way, such as while watching a livestream of the Mass on television, or at least to pray the rosary or the Liturgy of the Hours, one of the ancient traditions of the Church. Likewise, attending a regularly scheduled weekday Mass may provide a good alternative for those seeking to receive our Lord in the Eucharist, as those Masses usually have a lower number of people in attendance.”

For those who choose not to attend Mass in person, a live broadcast of the Mass can be viewed on the Cathedral of St. Francis of Assisi’s website, stfranciscathedral.org, or on several television channels. In addition, resources for prayer can be found on the Diocese of Metuchen’s website, diometuchen.org/coronavirus.