

October 29, 2020

Dear St. Mary's,

In a word to the church in April, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry reminded us that "as our seasons of life in the COVID-19 world continue to turn, we are called to continue to be creative, to risk, to love. We are called to ask, *What would unselfish, sacrificial love do?*" He answered, "Love is the community praying together, in ways old and new....Love calls us to care for our neighbors, for our enemies.... Love calls us to be gentle with ourselves, to forgive our own mistakes, to take seriously the Sabbath. Love calls us to be in love with God, to cultivate a loving relationship with God, to spend time with God, to be still and know that God is God."

"What would love do?" is the question that I and your vestry have been trying to answer throughout these months. At our October meeting we discussed how to both safely continue to hold our in-person services in the sanctuary and at what point we need to suspend in-person gatherings. Our county is currently experiencing a significant rise in cases of Covid-19. Our response of love, out of care for the health and safety of each other and the wider Cadillac community is to suspend all in-person gatherings until the rate of cases goes back down.

This is our policy:

- If the number of daily new cases per 100,000 people for Wexford County exceeds 9, then all in-person worship and activities will be suspended and the building will be closed to all but essential business.

This does not mean that the church is closed. The church is open anytime and anywhere that the people of God are present and doing God's work in the world. St. Mary's will hold a service of Morning Prayer on Zoom every Sunday while in-person services are suspended. The Medical Equipment Lending Pantry will remain open, following social distancing and mask use precautions and sanitizing the space, just as they have been doing throughout this pandemic. I, and your vestry, continue to be available to you by phone and online.

This Sunday, November 1, Morning Prayer will take place on Zoom at 10am. We will still celebrate the Feast of All Saints Day, remembering those whom we lost this year. Information on how to join the Zoom is in this email and on the St. Mary's website. The Zoom call can be joined online from a computer or smartphone or by calling in from any phone. I will be happy to help you get connected.

I ask for your prayers for me and your vestry as we continue to navigate how to respond with love to the changing landscape of Covid-19. Thank you for continuing to be church with us and for helping us to respond as love would. I hope to see or hear you on Zoom on Sunday evening.

In Christ,
Deacon Radha

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