

Diocesan offices continue work on limited basis

BY THE MESSAGE STAFF

On March 24, Evansville Bishop Joseph M. Siegel released the following statement regarding Indiana Gov. Eric Holcomb's March 23 Executive Order closing non-essential businesses across the state.

"We thank Gov. Holcomb for his proactive steps to help prevent Hoosiers' potential exposure to the COVID-19 virus and reduce its impact across our state. We strongly urge all people to follow the provisions of his Executive Order. At the same time, we also thank him for emphasizing the importance of religious and charitable organizations in providing critical spiritual support to all in need, especially the most vulnerable."

In his Executive Order, Gov. Holcomb specifically included "Organizations that Provide Charitable and Social Services," and "Religious Entities" in the definition of Essential Businesses and Operations that are exempted from the order (cf, #14, d and e).

Out of an abundance of caution, the Diocese of Evansville Catholic Center is closed to the public until further notice. However, based on the essential-businesses definition, the Diocesan offices will continue to function on a limited basis.

Bishop Siegel added, "The pastors of our parishes will determine if and when parish offices should be closed, and for how long, based on the needs of their parishioners and the local situation. Regardless of potential office closures, the spiritual and pastoral care of the faithful will continue across our 12 counties, albeit in different ways than normal as we continue to observe the guidelines provided by the CDC and local health agencies."

"I ask that we continue to pray for everyone suffering from this terrible illness and those who are caring for them. May God watch over them, and may he guide the work of those seeking effective treatments and preventive vaccines, along with that of our health and government officials."

Further updates will be posted online as they become available.

Stay up-to-date through websites, social media

BY THE MESSAGE STAFF

Today's 24-hour news cycle is not kind to print newspapers like **The Message**.

The information in this print edition was current as of Wednesday morning, March 25. As we all know from recent developments, a lot can change in 24-48 hours.

With that in mind, please stay connected to us online for the latest information:

Diocese of Evansville: www.evdiio.org/
The Message: evdiomessage.org/
Facebook: www.facebook.com/CatholicMessage/
Instagram: @themessageonline
Twitter: @messageonline

Catholic Schools to use extended-learning, waivers through at least May 1

BY MEGAN ERBACHER
The Message assistant editor

Diocese of Evansville Catholic School students will continue to complete school-work through a combination of virtual extended-learning days and waiver days through at least May 1.

Catholic Schools Superintendent Dr. Daryl Hagan announced March 19 that each week will consist of four extended-learning days with one waiver day, granted by Indiana Governor Eric Holcomb. The waiver day will allow teachers time to prepare lessons each week.

Each Catholic School provided additional details regarding specifics to their students and families.

The schedule will begin March 30 and extend through May 1, or completion of the school year on May 15.

In light of Indiana Governor Holcomb's March 23 stay-at-home order, Hagan plans to provide weekly updates to the school community, families and students via **The Message**. His updates will also be posted on **The Message** website, as well as to **The Message** social media accounts: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Links can be found at the end of this article.

Hagan said Catholic Schools, collaborating with parents and guardians as the primary educators, seek to educate the whole child by providing an excellent education rooted in Gospel values. In the past few weeks, he said the collaboration between families and schools has never been truer.

"As parents and educators, we understand that students need structure and routine, even in the midst of uncertainty," Hagan said. "The reality of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic is that we will continue to provide a Catholic education to our students utilizing creative and innovative instructional practices for the foreseeable future, and potentially for the remainder of

the school year."

Hagan applauded school administrators, faculty and staff who continue to rise to the challenge of providing a Catholic education within this new format. He also commended parents and students for creating learning centers within their homes dedicated to continual learning and completing assignments.

"Our Catholic school families and staff are unified and strong," Hagan said. "For 75 years, the Catholic Diocese of Evansville has strived to live as a community of faith, hope and charity, rooted in Christ. The Coronavirus outbreak has not changed that for any of us."

Check online for the most up-to-date Catholic Schools news.

Dr. Daryl Hagan will provide weekly updates on any Catholic Schools news via **The Message**. Please visit our website and social media accounts for the latest information:

The Message: www.evdiomessage.org/
Diocesan website: www.evdiio.org/
Facebook: www.facebook.com/CatholicMessage/
Instagram: @themessageonline
Twitter: @messageonline

Preventative steps, per CDC recommendations:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

Pope announces extraordinary 'urbi et orbi' blessing March 27



CNS photo — Vatican Media via Reuters

Standing in the window of the library of the Apostolic Palace overlooking an empty St. Peter's Square on March 15, Pope Francis blesses the city of Rome, which is still under lockdown to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

BY CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In response to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, Pope Francis said he will give an extraordinary blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city and the world) at 6 p.m. Rome time (Noon CDT/1 p.m. EDT) March 27.

The formal blessing — usually given only immediately after a new pope's election and on Christmas and Easter — carries with it a plenary indulgence for all who follow by television, internet or radio, are sorry for their sins, recite prescribed prayers, and promise to go to confession and to receive the Eucharist as soon

as possible.

After reciting the Angelus prayer March 22 from the library of the Apostolic Palace, Pope Francis announced his plans for the special blessing, which, he said, would be given in an "empty" St. Peter's Square because all of Italy is on lockdown to prevent further spread of the virus.

With the public joining him only by television, internet or radio, "we will listen to the word of God, raise our prayer (and) adore the Blessed Sacrament," he said. "At the end, I will give the benediction 'urbi et orbi,' to which will be connected the possibility of receiving

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