

**SAINT PETER CHURCH • CONNEAUTVILLE**  
**SAINT PHILIP CHURCH • LINESVILLE**

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March 17, 2020  
Feast of St. Patrick

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I'm sure that all of you are aware of the recent national health alerts and recommendations for preventing the spread of the highly contagious COVID-19 virus strain that has had a worldwide impact. In response to the seriousness of the situation and the need for social distancing Bishop Lawrence Persico has suspended all public Masses throughout the Diocese of Erie until further notice.

In our own parishes, we are taking this threat seriously and are cancelling Wednesday Stations of the Cross for the remainder of the Lenten season. First Friday All Night Adoration on April 3rd, as well as the remainder of our Fish "FryDays" at St. Philip and the Chicken Biscuit Dinner at St. Peter. Once this dangerous period subsides, we will have plenty of opportunities to gather once again for prayer and fellowship. In the meantime, we must act responsibly and take every precaution to protect ourselves, our families and our neighbor.

Like most of you, our parishes operate on a shoestring budget. The cancelled fundraisers are one way in which we help to supplement our income. However, with this interruption, we are going to experience a shortfall. In addition, given the Bishop's suspension of all public Masses, our parishes will not be receiving offertory income perhaps for several weeks.

Nevertheless, the bills will keep coming and our daily expenses will continue during this national crisis. For this reason, I ask that you prayerfully consider a couple of options to help increase or maintain your level of giving and responsible stewardship for the benefit of our parish families.

I encourage you to consider online giving as a safe and effective means to ensure that we have a steady offertory income each week. This would help us tremendously. If you desire to set this up, please contact the parish office and we can assist you. You don't even need a personal computer to do this. This process of giving has been met with great success in many parishes throughout the diocese and helps to maintain a stable financial environment as we move into the future.

Another suggestion is for you to mail your offertory to the parish office each week, especially during this time when there will be no public celebration of the Mass.

As your shepherd, I am grateful for everything you do for our parishes and trust that you will continue to support our faith communities, as best you are able.

Let our lives always reflect the faith we have in God. Fear nothing and pray about everything. Be strong and trust in God always. I will remember you and your intentions in my private Masses. Be assured of my continued prayers for you and your loved ones.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Chris M. Hamlett  
Pastor