



# SAINT *R*APHAEL THE ARCHANGEL PARISH



UT IN OMNIBUS GLORIFICETUR DEUS – THAT IN ALL THINGS GOD MAY BE GLORIFIED

Saint Raphael Rectory, 103 Walker St., Manchester, NH 03102-4566, U.S.A.  
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ESTABLISHED IN 1888 - NEW ENGLAND'S FIRST BENEDICTINE FOUNDATION

17 March 2020, Feast of Saint Patrick, patron of Ireland

Dear Parishioners and Friends of SRP:

As you know, our national response to the novel coronavirus outbreak grows more expansive and intrusive each day. This seems to be entirely necessary to arrest the spread of the virus and protect all of us, especially those most at risk.

To conform and cooperate with decisions and recommendations made by both the White House and the office of the bishop of the Diocese of Manchester, Saint Raphael will adopt the following precautions as of today:

- 1. Public celebration of the Eucharist is now suspended until further notice in conformity with the decision of our bishop, the Most Rev. Peter A. Libasci, D.D., bishop of Manchester.**
- 2. As a result of the suspension of Masses, all cantors, organists, choir members, ushers, extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist and altar servers are relieved of assigned duties at particular Masses until further notice.**
- 3. All Lenten social and liturgical activities are suspended.**
- 4. All religious education classes are suspended.**
- 5. The Pastor's Class for winter 2020, "Trapped by Sin, Freed by Christ," is suspended until further notice.**
- 6. Those who have requested announced Masses for deceased loved ones, or for living family and friends, should know that those Eucharistic celebrations will occur, but they will be privately in the church chapel or in the rectory chapel. If you wish to attend the Mass you have booked, you may contact Kerri Stanley, parish secretary, at the rectory office to request a new date once the coronavirus restrictions are lifted.**
- 7. Monday night, the SRP Food Pantry and Hope Chest adopted procedures to protect patrons and volunteers. We await further instructions from civil authorities.**
- 8. We planning to live stream the celebration of Holy Mass from Saint Raphael on Sunday and holydays, and possibly daily. We will update you on this opportunity to share in the Mass from home or office.**

As the novel coronavirus situation develops, we expect revisions expanding these restrictions and procedures will become necessary.

I hope that each of you and your families are faring reasonably amid the rapid changes required for effective prevention efforts. If we can be of assistance to you here SRP Rectory, please call the office at 603.623.2604.

This is a time for us, individually and collectively, to join in prayer for the quick return to health of those infected, for the mercy of God on those claimed, for the support of those caring for the sick, for the success of those researching vaccines and other solutions and for the wisdom of those determining public health policy. To be denied access to the Eucharist is a body blow to many of us. May it convey to all of us the seriousness of the current health situation. May we cooperate with public health officials at local, state and national levels. Let us rely on our faith in the Lord, the gift of reason and discretion he has bestowed so we act with prudence, circumspection and reason. And may we infuse our attitudes, words and behavior with a generosity of heart, that extends mercy and love to our neighbor in every respect.

My gratitude to all those who have expressed concern for us working at the parish. So far, we're doing fine – though our concerns grow a little each day. Let us remember to join our prayers with the Eucharistic sacrifice being celebrated each day – even when we are not physically present. A spiritual communion with Christ is a powerful gift to be received, and, in turn, bestowed on others. The Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary likewise has seen believers through many conflicts, controversies and crises over the years – even pandemics.

This week, as we celebrated in more subdued fashion perhaps, the great saints, Patrick, Joseph and Benedict, let us rely on the strength, witness and wisdom they share with us!

God bless, and we will be in touch soon,

P. Jerome, O.S.B., pastor of SRP

[www.st-raphael-parish.org](http://www.st-raphael-parish.org)

