

Letter From Cardinal Dolan: April 3, 2020

Dear Family of the Archdiocese of New York,

Things have been developing and changing rapidly during this coronavirus outbreak. Might I catch up with you on a few things?

1. Each year, during Lent and especially Holy Week, we are invited to join with Jesus as He journeys from Palm Sunday through His passion and death, all leading, ultimately, to the Glory of the Resurrection on Easter. This year, in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, we can feel a particular closeness with Our Lord and the people He encounters on the way to Calvary, like Veronica, Simon the Cyrene, and His own Blessed Mother. That's the theme of my Catholic New York column for next week. Because many of you may not have access to your regular copy of CNY, you can find the column [here](#).

2. A good number of people have called or emailed to express their disappointment that we are unable to have funeral Masses for their loved ones at this time. They understand the reason, they tell me, but feel a special sense of emptiness, beyond the pain of losing a parent, spouse, or sibling. Believe me, I feel the same way. Earlier this week, I had the first graveside service for an archdiocesan priest who died from coronavirus (two more have since died) for whom we could not offer the Mass of Christian Burial. In case you didn't see it, I recorded a little video which you can find [here](#).

3. WPIX-TV has very generously agreed to broadcast Mass from Saint Patrick's Cathedral for both Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday. Remember, daily and Sunday Mass is always available via livestream on their website [here](#), and broadcast on the Catholic Faith Network, and on The Catholic Channel of Sirius XM Satellite Radio. All of our Holy Week liturgies will be celebrated in Saint Patrick's Cathedral, and available on those platforms as well. Please note, for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, the Mass will begin at 10:00 a.m.

4. One question that has come up repeatedly among many of the priests and Monsignor Joseph LaMorte, our vicar general, is how to handle the distribution of palm this Sunday. We had hoped to find a way to distribute the palm, and many good suggestions were offered, but, ultimately, our medical experts told us the threat of possibly spreading the virus seemed too great. Therefore, we have asked the pastors to bless, then store, the palm until such time as we are able to once again open our churches. In the meanwhile, we have developed the attached image, should you wish to print or download it, that might serve as "virtual palm" until we can share the real thing.

5. Thank you to all of you who are continuing to support your parish during this crisis period. Over the past week, we've seen a growing number of people register for their parish's WeShare electronic giving service. Our hope is simple: that people will continue to support their parish at the same level as they always do. This will help the parishes continue to serve their people as they always have. Over the past few weeks, parish offertory collections have been off by more than 50%. Your help is desperately needed. And please don't forget the Cardinal's Annual Stewardship Appeal!

6. Our archdiocesan health care ministry, ArchCare, continues to do heroic work caring for our beloved seniors. As a reminder, if you have questions or other health-related concerns, call their hotline at 877-239-1998. If you are experiencing other challenges, our Catholic Charities stands ready to lend assistance wherever possible. Do not hesitate to call them at 888-744-7900.

7. May I ask again that you pray this Holy Week in a special way for those who are sick from the coronavirus, their families, the doctors, nurse, healthcare professionals, EMT's, and caregivers who are tending to them, and for all those who have suffered financially from a loss of work during this economic shutdown. Be assured of a special remembrance for you and your loved ones in my own Masses and prayers.

With prayerful best wishes for a blessed Holy Week, and a joyful Easter to come, I am,

Faithfully in Christ,

Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan
Archbishop of New York