



March 16, 2020

Dear Catholic Monarch Family,

These past few days have been a whirlwind of information about the Coronavirus from the CDC, the Diocese of Richmond, and Old Dominion University. I know that we are all being bombarded with emails from every place we have ever shared our email address with, but I wanted to send out a message about how Catholic Campus Ministry at Old Dominion University will proceed in the coming weeks.

ODU has announced the following:

- Spring Break has been extended for one week - March 16 - March 20
- All classes will resume online on Monday, March 23 and will continue as such until further notice.
- The University is closed this week (March 16-20), including the Webb Center, Perry Library, Barry Art Museum, Gordon Art Galleries and the Student Recreation Center.
- The University has cancelled all university events and we are prohibiting any student organization events and gatherings both on and off campus. This includes any meetings of organizations, events, parties, community service or any other activities affiliated with your organizations. Additionally, all student organization travel is suspended until further notice. This prohibition applies to all student organizations.
- See odu.edu/covid19 for up to date information from ODU.

The Diocese of Richmond has announced the following:

- Bishop Knestout directed the temporary suspension of all public Masses within the Catholic Diocese of Richmond, including Sunday, Holy Day, and weekday Masses.
- Until further notice, Bishop Knestout has granted a dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days for all the faithful in the Catholic Diocese of Richmond.
- Bishop Knestout will livestream private celebrations of Sunday Masses for the foreseeable future.
- See richmonddiocese.org/coronavirus for up to date information from the Diocese of Richmond.

What this means for CCM:

- CCM will not be hosting Sunday nor Daily Masses at the CCM House nor on campus.
- We will be hosting virtual events over the course of the next few weeks. These events will be adaptations of our current events or new events based on the new medium. The

Student Leadership Team is working on the best way to do this so more information will be forthcoming. If you have any suggestions or ideas, please feel free to contact me.

- To stay up to date on our virtual activities, see catholicmonarchs.org/virtual, catholicmonarchs.org/calendar, follow us on social media, and check your email.
- In order to best serve you, we would like to know where you all will be during this time away from campus. Please complete [this survey](#) to help us to remain connected as a community, support you, and provide you with resources you may need.

I feel that it is important to embrace the opportunity that this time has given us. In our fast-paced world, we are very rarely given the opportunity to pause, reflect, and pray. We are being given this right now and what better time to have it than during Lent. Lent is a time for prayer and fasting. We now have the perfect opportunity to fast and pray, to really spend time with our Lord in preparation for his Passion, Death, and Resurrection. Jesus spent forty days in the desert before his public ministry began as a time to prepare and grow in strength. We can use this time as our own, personal time in the desert, to strengthen and grow our faith. This time allows us to practice solidarity with our brothers and sisters who are sick or homebound and cannot physically attend Mass at all. We are also given the opportunity to show compassion and love for those who more easily fall ill than we, ourselves, do by putting their needs above our own. My prayer is that you are able to take the opportunities that this situation is giving you, for you to dive into a deeper faith with our Lord and into a deeper connection and understanding with your brothers and sisters in Christ.

I know that this is a scary, confusing, and frustrating time for all of us. I truly am sorry that you all will be away from campus, especially for you seniors. Please know that I am here for you in any way that you need. I am just a call, text, or email away. Know that I am praying for you all!

Peace,



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