



OUR LADY of BETHESDA
RETREAT CENTER

March 11, 2020

Coronavirus Statement

Dear Friends,

Amid the developing situation regarding the coronavirus (COVID19), Our Lady of Bethesda Retreat Center would like to offer the following information on our program offerings and precautions.

Regarding our offerings, our goal is to continue to offer our programs in a manner consistent with activities organized within the Archdiocese of Washington.

During this period of time, we are implementing the following precautions at Our Lady of Bethesda:

Anyone who is ill, suspects he or she is ill, or has recently traveled to a high risk location should refrain from participation in activities at Our Lady of Bethesda.

While at the retreat center, we are encouraging all staff and visitors to practice good personal health habits, including covering coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then, throwing the tissue in the trash. Staff and visitors should wash their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing their noses, coughing, or sneezing.

Before deciding to participate in a program or activity at Our Lady of Bethesda, we encourage visitors to review the following information provided by the Centers for Disease Control:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/2019-ncov-factsheet.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/share-facts.html>

Regarding the sanctuary and Masses celebrated at Our Lady of Bethesda:

Priests always practice good hand hygiene washing their hands before Mass and use hand sanitizer to cleanse hands before and after the distribution of Holy Communion.

Holy Water has been removed from the Holy Water fonts.

We will not offer the Precious Blood (Christ is fully present under both species of the Blessed Sacrament).

In addition, we ask that during Mass our guests:

- Refrain from shaking hands during the Sign of Peace
- Refrain from holding hands during the Lord's Prayer

We would also like to offer this perspective from an infectious disease specialist who is also a Catholic deacon regarding the virus should you want more information:

<http://www.thericatholic.com/stories/catholic-deacon-infectious-disease-specialist-offers-his-expertise-on-dealing-with-the-covid-19,11517>

Our Lady of Bethesda is continually monitoring the situation and will offer periodic updates via our website and event messages. May our Lenten prayer, fasting, and almsgiving be an added spiritual consolation to all those affected by this virus.

Yours in Christ,

Fr Daniel Pajerski, LC