

# St. Nicholas News

Francis Street Parish, Dublin 8. ---- 01-4530387 ---- 01-5611390



Third Sunday of Lent 15 March 2020

## STATEMENT BY AN TAOISEACH LEO VARADKAR



I need to speak to you about Coronavirus and CoVid-19. For the past few weeks, the Government and our public services have been focused on the impact of the virus. In that time, we have taken several important and unprecedented measures to protect public health. We have been preparing for all eventualities. Yesterday, the World Health Organisation formally described it as pandemic and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) updated its guidelines advising us all to act early to be effective. Our own National Public Health Emergency Team met last night and has issued new advice to Government. We are acting on that advice today. There will be many

more cases. More people will get sick and unfortunately, we must face the tragic reality that some people will die. The virus is all over the world. It will continue to spread but it can be slowed. Its impact can be reduced making it easier for our health service to cope and giving our scientists more time to develop better testing, treatments and a vaccine. It is important to remember that the disease effects will be mild for the majority of people especially the young and healthy. We know that older people and those with chronic diseases are at real risk. We have a duty as a society to protect ourselves and above all to protect others - our parents and grandparents, our family and friends, co-workers and neighbours. We have not witnessed a pandemic of this nature in living memory. This is uncharted territory. We said we would take the right actions at the right time. We have to move now to have the greatest impact. So, from 6pm today, the following measures are being put in place. They will stay in place until March 29th. Schools, colleges, and childcare facilities will close from tomorrow. Where possible, teaching will be done on-line or remotely. Cultural institutions will close. Our advice is that all indoor mass gatherings of more than 100 people and outdoor mass gatherings of more than 500 people should be cancelled. Arrangements are being made to ensure that everyone entering Ireland through our ports and airports is fully informed and self-isolates if they develop symptoms. You should continue to go to work if you can but where possible should work from home. In order to reduce unnecessary face to face interaction in the workplace, break times and working times should be staggered and meetings done remotely or by phone. Public transport will continue to operate. The shops will remain open and we have plans to ensure that supply chains will not be interrupted. We need the public and businesses to take a sensible and level-headed responsible approach. Restaurants, cafes and other businesses can stay open but should look at ways that they can implement the public health advice on social distancing. As a general rule, outside of work people should seek to reduce social interactions as much as possible. You can play your part by hand washing, coughing and sneezing into your elbow, and seeking medical advice if you develop symptoms. This is now more important than ever. The Cabinet will meet later today. Opposition party leaders and our counterparts in Northern Ireland and Britain will be briefed. In the period ahead, the Government will deploy all the resources we can muster, human and financial, to tackle this threat head-on. Those resources are extensive but not unlimited. Healthcare workers have been at the forefront of this crisis since it started. They will be at the frontline of the crisis in the time ahead. We must do all we can to help them, so they can help those who need help the most. I know that some of this is coming as a real shock and it is going to involve big changes in the way we live our lives. I know that I am asking people to make enormous sacrifices. We're doing it for each other. Together, we can slow the virus in its tracks and push it back. Acting together, as one nation, we can save many lives. Our economy will suffer. It will bounce back. Lost time in school or college will be recovered. In time, our lives will go back to normal. Above all, we all need to look out for each other. Ireland is a great nation. And we are great people. We have experienced hardship and struggle before. We have overcome many trials in the past with our determination and our spirit. We will prevail.

*Courtesy RTE*

## SOME BISHOPS CANCEL MASS (Though not All)

The Bishop of Limerick Brendan Leahy announced that mass is cancelled for the next three weeks. This follows similar measures already announced in both Meath and Galway on Thursday night.

## NOTICES

### Money Matters

Sunday 08 March 2020

Thank you for your contributions.

1st Collection: €200

2nd Collection: €240

Share: €55

Family Offering: €463

St. Vincent de Paul: €570



### Why Are Masses Being Cancelled in Francis Street Parish

The statement of the Taoisesach and the facts as outlined by the Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Tony Holohan, coupled with the serious increase of confirmed cases of COVID 19 left me with no choice. I consulted the Parish Pastoral Council and our neighbouring Parish in Meath Street, who have also come to the same conclusion. The well being of our parishioners and especially, those faithful elderly parishioners, must come first at all times. It would be hypocrisy to a staggering degree to put the celebration of the Liturgy above the welfare of our parishioners. Yes it is a great sacrifice to be without our gathering as God's People, the Body of Christ. We will miss each other, the conversation, the craic, yes, and even the gossip (God forgive us!). But Jesus is not locked up in the church nor in the ritual of the liturgy. He is deep within us, in our hearts. He journeys with us, in good and bad times alike. We may not be able to gather together for a few weeks but we can be as One, when we take time out to allow the Christ who lives within us, to speak his Love to us, to warm us with his Compassion and to calm us with his Peace. The life of Jesus was always at the service of others. We now, must put our lives at the service of others—only then can we truly be a Eucharistic People, truly the Word Made Flesh, for this time and this place.

*Fr. Martin*

## Child Protection

If you need to contact the Child Protection Rep in the parish, please ring 01-4530387. You do not have to give your name. Simply give a contact phone number.



## St. Vincent De Paul

I'm glad to be able to tell you that the St. Vincent de Paul will continue to serve those in our parish who are in need, in spite of COVID 19. They will of course take appropriate precautions. They are able to do this because of your continued generosity. Thank you again for your very generous donations to the February Collection.



## The Happy Easter Egg

The Happy Easter Egg: Why we celebrate Easter - because Jesus is alive again!" The Happy Easter Story booklet is inside the box and it tells the Easter story in easy-to-read rhyme, with great illustrations. This is a high quality Irish chocolate egg and honeycomb crisp milk chocolates (total 195g) are made in Ireland, support Irish businesses, and are from ethically sourced cocoa beans farmed with respect for workers' rights. For every Happy Easter Egg purchased, 10c is donated to the Hope Foundation, an Irish charity giving hope to deprived children in Kolkata in India, who certainly don't know the luxury of an Easter egg. Online there's an audio version of the Happy Easter Story, free Easter competitions, Easter narrations, and lots more. For more information contact Julie [www.happyeasteregg.ie](http://www.happyeasteregg.ie) phone: +353 (0)85 229 3722 [info@happyeasteregg.ie](mailto:info@happyeasteregg.ie)



## THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

### A reading from the book of Exodus

Tormented by thirst, the people complained against Moses. 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt?' they said. 'Was it so that we should die of thirst, our children too, and our cattle?' Moses appealed to the Lord. 'How am I to deal with this people?' he said. 'A little more and they will stone me!' The Lord said to Moses, 'Take with you some of the elders of Israel and move on to the forefront of the people; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the river, and go. I shall be standing before you there on the rock, at Horeb. You must strike the rock, and water will flow from it for the people to drink.' This is what Moses did, in the sight of the elders of Israel. The place was named Massah and Meribah because of the grumbling of the sons and daughters of Israel and because they put the Lord to the test by saying, 'Is the Lord with us, or not?'

**This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God**

### Psalm 94

**O that today you would listen to his voice. Harden not your hearts.**

Come, ring out our joy to the Lord; hail the rock who

saves us. Let us come before him, giving thanks, with songs let us hail the Lord. R/

Come in; let us bow and bend low; let us kneel before the God who made us for he is our God and we the people who belong to his pasture, the flock that is led by his hand. R/

O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the desert when your fathers put me to the test; when they tried me, though they saw my work.' R/

### Gospel Acclamation

Glory and praise to you, O Christ!  
Lord, you are really the saviour of the world; give me the living water, so that I may never get thirsty.  
Glory and praise to you, O Christ!

### A reading from the Gospel of John

Jesus came to the Samaritan town called Sychar, near the land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well is there and Jesus, tired by the journey, sat straight down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink'. His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, 'What? You are a Jew and you ask me, a Samaritan, for a drink?' - Jews, in fact, do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus replied: If you only knew what God is offering and who it is that is saying to you: Give me a drink, you would have been the one to ask, and he would have given you living water'. 'You have no bucket, sir,' she answered 'and the well is deep: how could you get this living water? Are you a greater man than our father Jacob who gave us this well and drank from it himself with his sons and his cattle?' Jesus replied 'Whoever drinks this water will get thirsty again; but anyone who drinks the water that I shall give will never be thirsty again: the water that I shall give will turn into a spring inside them, welling up to eternal life'. 'Sir,' said the woman 'give me some of that water, so that I may never get thirsty and never have to come here again to draw water.' 'I see you are a prophet, sir' said the woman. 'Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, while you say that Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.' Jesus said: 'Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know: for salvation comes from the Jews. But the hour will come - in fact it is here already - when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth: that is the kind of worshiper the Father wants. God is spirit, and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth.' The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah - that is, Christ - is coming; and when he comes he will tell us everything'. 'I who am speaking to you,' said Jesus 'I am he.' Many Samaritans of that town had believed in him on the strength of the woman's testimony when she said, 'He told me all I have ever done', so, when the Samaritans came up to him, they begged him to stay with them. He stayed for two days, and when he spoke to them many more came to believe; and they said to the woman, 'Now we no longer believe because of what you told us; we have heard him ourselves and we know that he really is the saviour of the world'.

**This is the Gospel of the Lord  
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**