

From the Chapel – March 13: A day of change



It's 11 a.m., and the chapel is dark, except for the spotlight over the crucifix and the flickering flame that reminds us that Christ is truly present in the purple-robed tabernacle.

We hold Mass at 11 a.m. every day here at OSV, but today is not a normal day. Yesterday afternoon, Kyle Hamilton, our CEO, announced that the senior leadership team had made the decision to disperse the workforce as much as possible. Those who can work remotely are doing so; those who must be in the office or on the production floor are here, but practicing “social distancing” and taking every precaution.

I often write my columns for Our Sunday Visitor in the chapel, before the Blessed Sacrament, in the dark. But never at 11 a.m., because then Msgr. Owen Campion is celebrating Mass, and we are taking our daily break from our work in bringing people closer to Christ and his Church to receive the graces we so desperately need to do that very work. Knowing that I would be the only regular Mass-goer still on site once our precautionary policy went into effect, Monsignor, bless his heart, offered to come in and say Mass for my sake. But with two parishes here in Huntington, both of which are still open and both of which are a half-block from my house, the prudent course is for Monsignor to “rest at home” (as the Italian policy has been labeled), while I seek the sacrament elsewhere.

And just as I typed that line, I received a notification from the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend that Bishop Kevin Rhoades has dispensed the faithful from the obligation to attend Mass through March 29.

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Nine days ago, in [my column for the March 15 issue](#) of Our Sunday Visitor, I noted that, because of the coronavirus, the modern insistence that science and economic growth have allowed us to rise above the trials of the past will be gravely challenged, because “we are about to return to something closer to the reality that most human beings experienced over the millennia that man has walked this earth.”

A lot has changed in nine days. What I merely suspected was true then is clearly true now.

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