



Archdiocese of San Antonio
Department of Communication

March 12, 2020

Latest updates on coronavirus-related cancellations, postponements in the Archdiocese of San Antonio

The response to the COVID-19 outbreak is a fast-paced story around the globe, nation, state, and in the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Following is an initial list of cancellations and updates, and additional information will be provided in a timely manner.

Youth Spectacular

Youth Spectacular: Walking in the Way of Love, the archdiocese's major annual gathering for and with youth, will not be held as scheduled. The event had been set to take place Saturday, March 21, on the campus of St. Mary's University. On March 11, St. Mary's announced -- to help ensure the health and safety of its campus community in dealing with COVID-19 -- that it was extending spring break by one week for students, with classes to resume on campus March 23. The additional week will also be used by St. Mary's to prepare for the possibility of delivering effective online instruction.

The action of St. Mary's University was consistent with announcements from all other institutions of higher education in San Antonio that day, including the University of the Incarnate Word, Our Lady of the Lake University, and the Mexican American Catholic College. At this time *Youth Spectacular 2020* is indefinitely suspended and a timeframe for rescheduling is yet to be determined.

Regarding registration fee refunds, all paid registration fees will be refunded. Please allow one to two weeks, depending on bank, for the refund to process whether paid by check or credit card. For payments made via check, refunds will be issued to the account used to submit payment within the same timeframe. If T-shirts were purchased, purchasers are requested to pick them up at the archdiocesan Pastoral Center at 2718 West Woodlawn Avenue in San Antonio on Thursday, March 19, from 8:30 a.m. until 2 p.m. T-shirt fees will not be refunded. To purchase additional T-shirts, limited sizes are available. For questions on refunds, call the Department of Pastoral Ministries administrative center at (210) 734-1952.

The cancellation of *Youth Spectacular* on March 21 is being taken out of a great abundance of caution and concern for all attendees as well as the wider community.

Catholic Night at the Spurs

Catholic Night at the Spurs with Archbishop Gustavo, scheduled for Wednesday, April 15, at the AT&T Center against the New Orleans Pelicans, will not take place due to the cancellation of the NBA season.

A March 12 statement from Spurs Sports and Entertainment CEO R.C. Buford reads in part, “The health and well-being of our fans, partners, staff, and players will always be our number one priority. Because this is a situation that changes hour-by-hour, we don’t have a lot of answers at this point. We will continue to share information as it becomes available. We thank our entire Spurs Family for your continued support, patience, and understanding during this time.”

CTSA Leadership Luncheon

The Catholic Television of San Antonio Leadership Luncheon, originally scheduled for Tuesday, March 24, will be held at a new date, on Tuesday, July 14, at the St. Paul Community Center at 1202 Donaldson Avenue.

The event will honor Auxiliary Bishop Michael J. Boulette with the St. John Vianney Award, Sister Susan Mika, OSB, with the Leadership in Communication Award, and Bishop Emeritus John Yanta with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

For ticket information, go to events.r20.constantcontact.com, or call Teri Palos at (210) 734-1938.

Catholic schools

The archdiocesan Department of Catholic Schools continues to closely monitor the developments concerning COVID-19 and is aware of recent developments affecting college and university students and those who have traveled internationally during spring break. Currently, as of March 12, it is planned that classes will resume on March 16. School officials are continuing to monitor the situation, working with other local ISDs and state agencies, and will follow their guidance. An update will be provided regarding the status of Catholic schools on Friday, March 13.

Catholic Charities

Catholic Charities will be postponing its Volunteer Recognition Luncheon slated for April 14. The organization is currently assessing the possibility of canceling or postponing a number of upcoming special events, and updates will be provided when additional information is obtained.

Precautionary guidelines for parishes

On March 3, the archdiocese recommended precautions to parishes in regards to the celebration of the liturgy, and those guidelines are still in effect until further notice.

Parishes are requested to temporarily distribute Holy Communion in the hand rather than on the tongue; temporarily discontinue the distribution of the Precious Blood at Mass; remove holy water from fonts at the church doors; and to avoid physical contact would be advisable. Other dioceses in the state and nationally have adopted these temporary measures. Pastors have discretion in instituting these directives in their parishes, in light of local needs and protocols. The pastors also have oversight regarding arrangements for all meetings and events that take place in their parishes.

Obviously, those who are feeling ill or who have underlying health issues should remain home and not come to church. There is, of course, no obligation for the sick to be a Mass. To stay home from Sunday Mass in these circumstances is not a mortal sin. In fact, love for neighbor should prompt individuals not to attend Mass if they are contagious and exhibiting symptoms.

We also strongly encourage all to follow the simple recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regarding:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, going to the bathroom, and before eating or preparing food.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

The COVID-19 outbreak has been declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization, and more serious measures are being taken in other parts of the country and in Texas to combat the spread of the virus. We ask for prayers for all those affected by this virus around the globe, and that the threat of COVID-19 be removed across the world, in our country, state, and locally.

The archdiocese continues to listen to health and civil authorities regarding public safety. We are not likely to control the virus, but rather control the spread of the virus. For information on COVID-19, see <https://www.sanantonio.gov/Health/News/Alerts/CoronaVirus>