



From the Desk of the Dean

Saint James' Cathedral, Diocese of Athabasca

The Very Rev. Jason Haggstrom

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March 19th, 2020 – Feast of St. Joseph

My fellow Cathedralites,

Most of you I am hoping, are aware by of the decision of our Bishop to shut down our Church buildings, including public worship and all activities. In consideration of what we are being asked to do by health care providers. There is relief for some and disappointment for others that the Church is closed. Relief that we are closed to protect people. There is sadness expressed too, because we are a close knit community and care for one another, enjoying time that we spend together in worship and in the many other things that we do.

There is much uncertainty to all that is happening at this moment. It is like nothing that I have seen in ministry since I began back in 1991. But I want to reassure you that everything that can be done to support people in this health emergency, is being done. I do want to encourage all to keep in touch with one another and to actively pray for an end to this plague. And as we wait, remember to be kind and to do good for those around you. Remember to pray and make your petitions known to God with thanksgiving because we know that he is our light and our salvation no matter what our circumstances are. Remember your faith in Christ Jesus who is our hope, for we are reflections of his light in these dark times.

I would also ask that people remember that we are going to need to keep our giving up, continuing to support our ministry. Those on P.A.C. (preauthorized giving) are fine and if you wish to join that as an option please call me. We will work that out for you. You can also use the Canada Gives button on the Diocesan Website or you can mail/bring it in to the Office in the mornings during the week.

I will be isolating myself to a point for now. If you need to talk, please do not hesitate to call or email me. We can make use of technology to make connections and where it is necessary, we will make a face to face possible.

There is one exception to the here at Saint James and that is the Soup Kitchen. For now, these amazing volunteers are going to continue operations to care for the most vulnerable in the community. The homeless and the poor are as much at risk for the sickness as any and there is nowhere for them to rest and recuperate. There are changes that are coming to how they will operate, including not sitting to eat in the Lower Hall. Bathrooms will be available and bag lunches will be served.

As soon as there is more to communicate, I will be using all the normal forms to get the word out as to what is next. The peace of the Lord be with you in these trying times. – Jason+