



Office of the President-Rector

UPDATE #4 – inclusive of all policies to date

TO: Seminarians
Resident Faculty
Resident STL Priests
Staff Members
Non-Resident Faculty
EI Students
EI Faculty
Housekeeping Staff
Food Service Staff

FROM: Fr Rev. Phillip J. Brown, P.S.S.
President-Rector

DATE: March 17, 2020

RE: St. Mary's Seminary & University Plan to Address the Coronavirus

St. Mary's Seminary & University is committed to a healthy community. One of the most important elements of the Sulpician tradition is community and collegiality. It is in this spirit that the outlined measures are being put in place. We are our brothers' keeper. We are responsible for the good of the entire community and we are called to do our best to ensure the health of the entire community and each member of it. This is the meaning of the Body of Christ: "If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored; all the parts share its joy." (1 Cor 12:26).

March 16, 2020 Fr. Brown's message to the entire St. Mary's Community:

I know these are challenging and disorienting times. Please know that the entire St. Mary's community, while not together in the same building at this time, remains strong and united. We need to keep each other in prayer and to continue praying that the current emergency will pass and the suffering and inconvenience it entails will begin to be alleviated. Please do everything you can to keep yourself and your family members safe and healthy as we look forward to when we will be able to reunite physically and pick up where we left off!

I have appointed two teams to address St. Mary's Seminary & University's response to the Coronavirus emergency, an administrative Response Team and a Seminarian Response Team which have helped us to examine all options for keeping our community

St. Mary's Seminary & University Plan to Address the Coronavirus

safe and minimizing the possibilities for the virus to spread into our community. We have taken a comprehensive approach to preparedness which has led to rapidly evolving policies and safety measures on a day-to-day, sometimes an hour-by-hour basis. We have been continuously monitoring the situation regarding COVID-19 and implementing applicable guidance from The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Maryland Department of Health (MDH), and providing regular informational updates. We have also monitored and followed suggested guidelines from the Commissioner of Education and higher education authorities, and have also participated in collaborative conversations with the Maryland Independent Colleges and Universities Association.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Maryland Department of Health (MDH) continue to monitor the situation and are providing updates to healthcare facilities and providers via their websites, emails, and conference calls. The CDC has updated its travel advisories to include discouraging non-essential travel to *China and South Korea* and practicing enhanced infection prevention precautions with travel to *Iran, Italy, and Japan*. The most updated information can be found via the Travel Advisory website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>.

St. Mary's Seminary & University Actions
EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

- **Update Effective 3/16/20** –After consulting with Archbishop Lori and the Seminary administration, the decision has been made to close the Seminary. This was announced to the seminarians today at Mass. Classes were suspended as of noon and men began making arrangements to move out of the building no later than 3/18/20 (unless permission has been given to stay longer by the Vice Rector due to special circumstances).
- **Update Effective 3/16/20** – Fr. Brown communicated directly with all sending Bishops and Vocation Directors first about the possibility of closure and then about the decision to close.
- **Update Effective 3/16/20**- The Dean of the School of Theology is making provisions for the seminarians to complete their coursework for the semester in a manageable way given all of the circumstances.
- **Update Effective 3/16/20** - The Lector/Acolyte Installation ceremony scheduled for 3/19 has been cancelled
- **Update Effective 3/16/20** – As a rule all staff members will be working remotely effective no later than close of business 3/18/20 for one month at which time we will re-evaluate. Exceptions will be made only if it is certain there is no meaningful risk that the virus could be transmitted and no risk to the employee. Our IT staff has worked with all supervisors to insure that essential personnel have remote accessibility to work to insure continuity in St. Mary's operations in the wake of this unprecedented situation.
- **Everyone** is to follow the CDC recommendations to 1) wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after using the restroom and before Mass. If anyone is unable to wash their hands, they should use an alcohol-based (at least 70%) hand sanitizer. 2) Every effort should be made to avoid touching one's eyes, nose and mouth

- with unwashed hands; 3) coughs and sneezes should be covered with a tissue to be immediately thrown away; if a tissue is not handy, one should cough into his or her elbow or upper arm; 4) high-touch areas in one's immediate work area should be disinfected frequently with sanitizing cleaners, gels, or wipes (e.g., Clorox); 5) It is important at all times, but especially now, to practice good health habits: get adequate sleep, have a healthy diet, drink plenty of fluids, and get some exercise. These measures contribute to a healthy immune system.
- Everyone entering the Refectory must use hand sanitizer. There are no exceptions to this rule.
 - **Update 3/11/20** – Even if you are going into the Refectory for a quick cup of coffee you must follow these guidelines. Please do not be offended if anyone reminds you – we are all responsible for the health of his community!
 - Everyone who is sick is to stay home or self-quarantine in his or her room/stay home and not come to work or class until free of fever (100 degrees or higher Fahrenheit) or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medicines, or any other symptoms (serious cough or cold symptoms) for at least 24 hours. In other words, if you need a fever-reducing medication to keep your temperature down, you are not ready to return.
 - Employees are expected to notify their supervisor if sick with the aforementioned signs and symptoms. There are no exceptions to this rule.
 - Employees who come to work with such symptoms will be sent home immediately.
 - Seminarians must notify the Vice Rector (not just the infirmarian) immediately of these symptoms and are not to attend Mass, communal prayer, class, or pastoral assignment. Those who are sick are not to go into the Refectory. They must make arrangements with the infirmarian to have meals brought to them.
 - **Update Effective 3/12/20** – All pastoral assignments to hospitals, nursing homes and any Peace and Justice outreach programs to the homeless are suspended until further notice. Fr. Brown encourages all seminarians to be available for online/telephone visits as requested and appropriate.
 - **Update Effective 3/13/20** – If a seminarian is uncomfortable with exposure at his pastoral assignment he should alert the Vice Rector and not go your assignment.
 - **Update Effective 3/11/20** – EI classes are online only until 3/26/20 at which time this policy will be re-evaluated and may be extended.
 - **Update Effective 3/11/20** – We have cancelled several events including the Carroll Lecture (3/18), Fr. Maillet's piano recital (3/29) and the Holocaust Remembrance Service (4/1) out of an abundance of caution for outside guests and our community.
 - **Update Effective 3/13/20** – The Deacon program for 3/21 and 3/28 have been cancelled.
 - **Update Effective 3/13/20** – We cannot allow any outside guests for Lector/Acolyte on March 19th
 - **Update Effective 3/13/20** – We will hold all weekend masses in the main chapel, not St. Charles Chapel to better accommodate social distancing.
 - **Update Effective 3/13/20** – We have cancelled Tenebrae (3/25)
 - **Update Effective 3/11/20- Community** masses are restricted to the seminarian community through the end of this academic year.
 - **Update Effective 3/11/20** – All seminarians and faculty are required to report their travel plans to Fr. Maillet. All staff members are required to report their travel plans to Betty Visconage. Individuals may be required to stay away from campus for up to two

weeks after returning to Maryland. Special sick leave provisions have been made for staff so that all leave is paid.

- **Update Effective 3/13/20** - In order to encourage social distancing, we remind all to trying and keep at least arm's length distance in the Chapel, the Classroom and the Refectory. We are making the Forum Café available for eating in addition to the dining room. We are removing the salad bar and taking other measures in the Dining Room to be proactive in exposing individuals to as few germs as possible. The dining room is only open to residents and staff.
- **Update Effective 3/13/20** – We have moved a hand sanitizer station immediately inside the front doors and will pay special attention the front door handle with regular sanitizing.

Mass Protocols

We are aware that many are uncomfortable with reception of communion from the cup when there is a high risk of virus; therefore, communion will be under one form only (the host) until the COVID-19 situation has improved.

Update – Effective 3/13/20 – *We are following Archbishop Lori's statement of yesterday that it is strongly recommended that Holy Communion be distributed in the hand of the communicant and not on the tongue.*

- Holy Water fonts will be emptied until the situation has improved.
- The Sign of Peace is not to be exchanged by shaking hands and preferably without physical contact until the situation has improved.

Other

- **Update Effective 3/11/20** -The library is closed to all outside patrons. Only current EI and Seminary students, faculty and staff are permitted to use the library until further notice. EI students must wear their badges onsite.
- **Update Effective 3/11/20** – The Archives is closed to all outside users until further notice.
- Broadway Cleaning Services (our housekeeping service) will disinfect common areas (e.g., bannisters, doorknobs, restrooms, etc.) more frequently and on a regular basis with appropriate cleaners. Broadway Services will follow the advice provided by the Johns Hopkins Office of Critical Event Preparedness and Response of the Department of Emergency Medicine.
- Our Kitchen staff has been reminded to practice the highest standards of food hygiene when preparing, presenting, or serving food.
- Signage will be placed in common areas to remind all to wash their hands or use hand sanitizer.

An action under consideration for St. Mary's if the situation worsens in Maryland (i.e., if numerous confirmed cases of COVID-19 occur):

- We will consider opportunities for staff to telecommute. **Put into place 3/16/20**