



# St. Matthew Catholic Church

221 John Paul Avenue, Statesboro, GA 30458

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May 1, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

Please continue to join me and the Universal Church in **keeping the Sabbath Holy! We thank you for “attending” daily and Sunday Masses at our parish via Facebook Livestream and YouTube.** Thank you for your patience as we keep trying to work out the kinks. We appreciate John J. Gleissner’s help in improving the quality of our production, and all-in-all, we think it is pretty good for a production that relies on a laptop, a borrowed webcam, and a Go-Pro camera! ☺

**This month, we will also offer Theology on Tap on Wednesday, May 6 at 7 pm via Livestream on Facebook. I will be hearing “drive-thru” confessions in the parking lot in front of the church from 4 pm—4:45 pm each Saturday. May is the month of Mary and the Holy Father has asked us to pray the Rosary faithfully!**

A reminder that you can find daily and Sunday Mass readings at the following website: [usccb.org](http://usccb.org). **I encourage you to take advantage of our FORMED program**, which is available online. To access FORMED for free go to: [www.formed.org](http://www.formed.org).

Archbishop Hartmayer, after prayerful consideration and input from the medical community and other leaders, has made the decision that parishes in our Diocese will remain closed to public worship during the month of May. **THIS WAS NOT DONE LIGHTLY.** We know everyone deeply desires to return to the sacraments and to see fellow parishioners. The nature of our gathering in one place brings us joy and a strong sense of communion. However, it also presents challenges in implementing safe practices when we are being asked to continue social distancing and keep group gatherings to smaller numbers.

Though we “do not know the day or the hour” when we can begin to resume public worship, we remain watchful. Each parish facility is unique. Our clergy and staff are conducting our own research and making a checklist of the things that will need to be done to ensure that we can mitigate health risks while also meeting the spiritual needs of our St. Matthew Parish family and our fellow community members.

Let us join together in our prayers for an end to this pandemic and for decision-making that places the dignity of human life as the first priority. Many people are suffering due to the economic impact of difficult choices. Together we pray for them to recover livelihoods, and in the meantime, to find help from our parish and community. We remember most especially those who are sick, quarantined, or severely affected in any way by this viral outbreak. **If you are in need of the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick please call (478) 955-5854.**

Thank you for your continued support of our parish. Many of you have mailed in your envelopes or signed up for online giving. If you are interested in electronic giving you can sign up at [www.osvonlinegiving.com/564](http://www.osvonlinegiving.com/564).

We know that God provides what we NEED... the manna of the scriptures literally means “enough”. As an Easter people who celebrate the hope of the Resurrection, we step forward in faith and have been doing everything we can to reduce our overhead costs without sacrificing our mission.

In April, we maintained and even increased our outreach to the Statesboro Area. We purchased and gave our Hospitality Sunday donuts to local grocery store workers and partnered with Orchid’s Asian Restaurant to feed 75 members of the East Georgia Regional Medical Center staff. The Haiti Sewing Group continues to make masks for the medical community.

***We don’t think we’re biased when we say we are proud to be part of what our staff, community, and parishioners consider to be the best parish in the world! THANK YOU for keeping the faith!***

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fr. John R. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr. John R. Johnson  
Pastor