

Cardinal R Sarah, March 17, 2020 (translated by @brndandrews)

Dear friends,

I am happy to join you in writing these lines to encourage you to pray even more without ceasing. Pray above all with a heart full of love and charity, a heart reconciled to God and our brothers and sisters.

If circumstances or civil or church guidance occasioned by the coronavirus prevent you from going to church simply to meet with the Lord or take the Eucharist, know above all that no one, absolutely no one, can prevent you from turning to God and begging his help in this moment of great testing. Remember the words Jesus tells us today, on this Third Sunday of Lent: "Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem....But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth." (John 4:21-24) It is now, in this time of coronavirus that is afflicting the peoples of the whole world, that we must turn to God with more intensity, confidence, and certainty, entrusting ourselves to his fatherly tenderness, and to Blessed Virgin Mary, so she may cover us and protect us with her motherly mantle. As he wrote to the Christians in Ephesus, Saint Paul also instructs us: "With all prayer and supplication, pray at every opportunity in the Spirit. To that end, be watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the holy ones (Eph 6: 18)

Together, with one heart and soul, unified in the same faith, let us lift our hands to God and implore Him. Entrust to him the world and his Church. His heart will be softened and will save us.