



March 18, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Peace in Christ.

We write to you about a spiritual response to the coronavirus (COVID-19). In the midst of the fear and worry that is gripping our community, we have an opportunity to turn together toward the Lord and seek the relief that only he can provide. We have a chance to remember the pilgrim nature of our Church, that our lives belong to the Lord, and that we depend on him both in life and death. Additionally, we have an opportunity to act in solidarity through our united prayers for the sick, for those who care for the sick, for those who are alone, for the dead, and for deliverance of the human family in all parts of the world from sickness and evil.

Throughout the ages, faced with all manner of illness and calamities, believers have petitioned for God's grace and assistance through litanies. A litany is a prayer that we can offer when we are alone, at home together with family, or gathered as a virtual community. Simply joining in a litany to call upon the name of the Lord and invoke the help of our holy patrons and the Blessed Virgin Mary reminds us that no matter how afraid we might feel, we are never really alone.

We also want to use this providential opportunity to put into practice our faith in the importance of prayer. Through prayer, even in difficult moments, we can remain in relationship with God and realize that we are not alone. Prayer is action of the most powerful kind because it invokes the help of the most powerful being--God, the only one who can truly help and save us. While his answer to our prayers may not always be according to our desires, it is according to his plans. The challenges that we face in the world, especially with the uncertainty of the present moment, call us to prayer. No matter our age, we are never too young to pray. Our young people and families, who so often feel helpless in the face of these struggles and fears, can be given real spiritual tools through concrete invitations to pray.

We are accordingly inviting all the faithful of the Archdiocese who are able, especially those who are homebound in these days and those families with children in our parish religious education programs, to join together in prayer with the young people from our Catholic schools to face the challenges of the present moment.

We have asked that the students from every Catholic school in the twelve-county territory of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis set aside time every day at 11:05 a.m., wherever they may be, to join together in offering the *Litany in Time of Need* until this issue passes. Please join us by tuning in to Relevant Radio, 1330AM or www.relevantradio.com, where the litany will be broadcast each day at 11:05 a.m. What a wonderful sign of unity it will be to have all of you join our young people who were sent home this week from our schools, praying together at the same time for protection and help.

Attached you will find an electronic copy of the litany for your use. Please note that the document is designed to be photocopied at your parish and freely distributed. Please join us in asking all the saints, especially Our Lady, to protect us and heal the sick in this time of trial.

With gratitude for your cooperation in this request, and with every best wish and prayer,

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Bernard A. Hebda".

Most Reverend Bernard A Hebda
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Andrew H. Cozzens".

Most Reverend Andrew H Cozzens
Auxiliary Bishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

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