

## **ST. MARGUERITE BOURGEOYS PARISH**

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9 December 2017

Dear Parishioners and Eucharistic Adorers of St. Marguerite Parish,

In light of recent events that have caused me concern, we are going to make a change to our Adoration Chapel, effective on **Friday, 15 December**. This decision was made after careful consideration and consultation, including informing Bishop Frank J. Caggiano of this change in our parish.

Our Adoration Chapel has been open for 24-hours since March 2003. As pastor, it is my responsibility to ensure as much as possible the safety of parishioners and the security of the physical property in addition to overseeing the spiritual life of St. Marguerite. The physical configuration of the parish building requires that people have access through the narthex and the office corridor if they need to use the restroom. As a result, people can walk through this building at all hours of the night with no effective supervision. The cameras we installed are not deterrents to crime in-and-of themselves. There is simply too much availability inside the building that anyone can access at any time.

For example, before I arrived as pastor, there were two thefts to the votive candle boxes and a third attempt was made. After I arrived, another theft occurred. Consequently, I began locking the church proper. The Brookfield Police advised me that having this building open for 24-hours presented a great risk. The Police are concerned that a person could easily hide and wait in the parking area if he wanted to commit a crime as an adorer was either arriving or leaving. The Brookfield Police have been advising me for two-and-a-half years to secure this building at night.

Most recently, an individual was wandering through the building at night and in the early morning hours picking the locks to steal wine and other valuables. This person hid his face from the security cameras. We worked with the Brookfield Police to catch him, and the Police once again warned me about keeping this building open all night. My concern was what potentially could have occurred if an adorer encountered this person in the hallway on the way to the restroom in the early morning and this thief then became agitated and violent.

If any violent situation were to occur, I would have to bear the responsibility for it. Neither the parishioners nor Bishop Caggiano would be held accountable; as pastor, that responsibility falls on me. No matter how many security measures are in place, if a crime happens, it is too late to do something after-the-fact. I personally do not want to take that responsibility if a violent incident were to occur in the early hours of the morning with no one readily available to help the victim. There is no way currently to eliminate this possibility completely. I have already lived through a person who violently attempted to break into the rectory on 8 September 2013 to do me personal harm. I do not want anyone to have to go through a similar situation in our chapel or in the church.

Greater security measures are necessary to ensure the safety of our parishioners, our adorers, and our building. **Consequently, beginning on Friday, 15 December, we will lock the chapel and church at 5:00 pm. They will reopen daily by 7:30 am. Eucharistic Adoration will still be available each day from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm in the chapel.** Because the chapel enjoys a nearly continuous stream of adorers during the day along with a security camera installed for our direct monitoring, we will no longer require people to sign up for any hours during the day. Since we are shortening the period of daily Adoration, I believe that we will have enough adorers to cover the available hours.

I understand that this change will be very emotional for some people. It is certainly regrettable that we can no longer safely offer Perpetual Adoration, but I believe that in today's environment, it is unfortunately necessary to limit Adoration to the daytime hours given our situation at St. Marguerite and, of course, given the need to protect the safety of the Blessed Sacrament and our adorers.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Shawn William Cutler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Rev. Shawn William Cutler  
Pastor