

## Why We Keep the Church Open in Crises

Simply stated: it is to the Church, to God, that people turn in times of trouble.

To criticize the decisions of pastors, especially those in the “catholic” churches, to keep their churches open in dire times, or for refusing to adopt non-liturgical means of meting out the Sacraments, is very easy but falls short of understanding the nature of the Church and its Sacraments.

First, one must consider the importance of the Church as the House of God wherein we find peace and comfort in our worship and praise, and partaking in the Sacraments he offers us there at his Altar.

The Church has for centuries been a place not only of spiritual refuge but also of physical refuge. There one finds comfort from the world.

Churches must remain open and function as normally as possible, even in the direst of times.

Second, one must consider the nature of each Sacrament of the Church. They are holy, and not to be taken lightly. While some may differ in these modern times, the Lord’s Supper is not “fast food”, to be handed out in drive-thrus, or through other forms of distribution outside of the Church itself. Hospital and home communions do not fall under this, as they are part of the Sacramental System for ministering to the sick and infirm.

Innovative practices for meting out the Sacraments fail to conform to the purpose and intent of the Sacramental System, whether it be for Confession, Matrimony, Unction, or the Lord’s Supper, if they are offered casually and non-liturgically.

The Church and the Sacramental System serve a God-centered purpose for the comfort and salvation of Christians throughout the world. To denigrate or otherwise disrespect the Sacraments for convenience is contrary to their very nature.

It is better to have a spiritual confession in one’s home rather than a mockery of a confession in a churchyard attended to by a priest in a chair at a distance.

It is better to make a spiritual communion in the privacy of one’s home than to receive the Bread of Heaven as if it were a “burger & fries”.

Do not make a mockery of what God has ordained.

Do not shutter the House of God to those who have need of His comfort.

Closing churches, especially in dire times, is nothing more than locking out the Family in Christ. It is as if one locked out his own children for fear of what contamination they may possess. Where do they go for comfort and succor if not to the Church, their spiritual home?

Lastly, the priest, representing the bishop as shepherd, does not leave the flock under his care without a home and his spiritual protection at whatever cost to himself. He stands ready at the door of the sheepfold to let the sheep in and out, and to guard them from the wolves and other dangers of the world.