



## Solar Eclipse, Monday April 8<sup>th</sup> Preparations & Precautions



As many of you know, there will be a Solar Eclipse unfolding Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup> between 1:53 and 4:25 pm with the total eclipse at 3:11 pm, causing nighttime darkness for nearly four minutes. We are one of 35 counties in Ohio considered ideal for viewing the eclipse. Please note appropriate glasses are necessary for safe viewing and available at local libraries.

State and local emergency officials are projecting 70,000 to 100,000 or more visitors in our local area with speculations about traffic gridlock and many people looking for parking (some with RV's), restroom facilities, other services, etc. Schools as well as numerous businesses are closed April 8<sup>th</sup> out of concern for safety on potentially congested roads. There is no need for panic, but wise to plan and prepare. Having a full tank of gas and provisions in advance are recommended. Our staff have sought input and advice from local emergency management personnel for how best to plan and prepare our church(es) and parish grounds.

Our hope is to help visitors see and experience the beauty of our Catholic churches and our faith, but at the same time we have a responsibility to ensure that our sacred spaces are protected and respected as well as being available for our Sunday worship. The following steps will be taken at our Marion parishes to assure our churches and grounds are protected as well as providing parking for weekend Masses.

- *The Church parking lots will be open for weekend confessions and Masses.*
- *Adoration, the 5:30 PM Mass and confessions at St. Sebastian on Monday, April 8th are cancelled out of concern for safety on potentially congested roads as the eclipse concludes.*
- *All Churches in the Marion Catholic Community will be locked as of Friday morning but will be open for Masses and confessions. Nativity BVM will be open from 9 am to Noon on Monday. Restrooms at Nativity will be locked outside of Mass times to avoid potential overuse and plumbing issues.*
- *Designated parishioners living near each church are being asked to keep an eye on the churches and to ensure safety and respect for our churches and grounds.*
- *Marion Church cemeteries will be blocked off to all traffic starting Friday morning until after the eclipse to protect and respect the cemetery gravestones and grounds.*
- *The St. Rose Parish Office will be closed Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup>.*

Thanks in advance for your understanding and cooperation with our plans for our Marion churches and grounds.