

...as we return...

***Parishioner Guidelines***

***May 21, 2020***

The #1 priority when we return is “The praise and worship of God in the Eucharist”. While that is true, we want you to be mindful that when we return there will be several changes and we need your help.

As you know the Bishop has granted dispensation, currently through June 30, 2020. If you are vulnerable due to age, health concerns, or are caring for an at-risk person or persons, please stay home.

**As you prepare for Mass:**

Please plan ahead! We will be under strict attendance guidelines when we reopen.

Please go to [www.ourcatholiccommunity](http://www.ourcatholiccommunity) or call the parish offices and register for the Mass you would like to attend (remember there are 4 in case your favorite time is full). You will be asked which Mass you would like to attend and how many are coming from your household. This is important for seating because all those who are from the same household (not necessarily same family) may sit together in the same pew. We will be limited to capacity (and this may vary depending on the state’s guidelines for gatherings) when we reopen and only those who have signed up will be admitted.

As you are preparing to come to Mass, we ask that everyone brings their own hand sanitizer for yourself and your family. To limit exposure, we have covered water fountains during this time and ask that you use the bathroom before you come.

Everyone **2 years of age and older will** need to wear a mask.

**When you arrive at Mass:**

When you arrive for Mass at St. Joseph, we ask that you enter through the doors facing Pleasant St. off the parking lot with the ramp. This will be the only entrance open, other exterior doors will be unavailable. Please have your mask on upon entering the building.

When you arrive at St. Joseph or St. Mary’s please leave six feet between you and other parishioners that may be entering at the same time. This is a new norm for us so please be patient.

Ushers will be there to greet you and check you in. You will then be directed into the church.

You will notice a large basket near the side entrance at St. Joseph’s and in the nave at St. Mary’s. This is where you can leave your weekly envelope or contribution. We will not be passing baskets at Offertory. You may also consider contributing online.

Once inside you may notice there are some changes to the worship space. Holy water fonts will remain empty. Hymnals, prayer books, and all other envelopes have been removed. Please remember to take all your own personal items and/or worship aids with you when you leave. Pews have been roped off to allow for social distancing and there will be signs asking that only three (3) people sit in a pew (Members of the same household of more than three may sit in the

same pew and closer than six feet apart). We are asking that everyone practice appropriate social distancing during Mass. There will, temporarily, be no balcony seating.

**As Mass begins:**

Exchanging the sign of Peace has always been optional and will be omitted for this time. We will not join hands for the praying of the Our Father.

**During Communion:**

**Only** the Celebrant will be administering Holy Communion.

Communicants will be excused by ushers and should keep 6 feet between themselves and other parishioners (members of the same household may go forward together). As you are dismissed please practice safe distancing and keep 6 feet between you and other parishioners.

Face masks are to be worn while approaching in procession. When you are by the first pew remove your face covering, bow, Celebrant: “the Body of Christ”, respond “Amen” **THEN** move forward to receive with arms fully extended. Step to the side and place your mask back on your face before proceeding to your seat. Holy Communion will not be distributed with gloves, nor are those receiving to receive communion wearing gloves.

**After Mass:**

Parishioners are to exit using appropriate distancing and keeping 6 feet between each other (Households may leave together) and we ask that during this time we avoid congregating in the gathering spaces and remember to practice safe space outside too. During this time there will be no hospitality, breakfasts, and/or any type of gatherings

We ask that those at St. Joseph leave by the same doors you entered, to avoid unnecessary contact with other surfaces and out of respect for those cleaning and disinfecting our spaces.

**Other things to be aware of:**

Be aware of the surfaces you are touching. If you do not need to touch it, please don't. Please avoid going to other parts of the buildings. Those who are doing the disinfecting, thank you!

There will also be less ministers during this time, so we ask for your patience and understanding as we work towards “normal” again. This is a process and we will be re-evaluating each week as we go forward.

Thank you so much for your patience during this time. We understand it will take a little getting used to but are excited to be able to see each other again. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the parish offices. We understand this is a very confusing time for everyone and want to help in whatever way we can.

God's peace be with you.