

May 2, 2020

Dear Parish Family,

May God's blessings be with you as we continue through the Easter Season! Be assured that all of you have been and remain in my prayers that you are well and safe during this unprecedented time.

To be sure, the past month-and-a-half or so has been very challenging for all of us. Whether you or your loved ones have had to face the coronavirus illness itself, or in whatever way your livelihoods have been affected, adjustments certainly have had to be made. Of course, the major adjustment affecting all of us as a parish family has been our inability to come together in person to celebrate Mass and the other Sacraments. While live streaming is a technological marvel, it certainly cannot compare to our being with one another in our worship.

This past Thursday, April 30, Bishop Vasquez has issued a Decree stating that we may resume the celebration of public Masses beginning this Tuesday, May 5. Obviously, this will not be an immediate return to how we've been celebrating prior to the closure. Temporary protocols must be followed until such time that, in line with the civil authorities, Bishop Vasquez determines that we can expand on how things will be done. Such protocols include:

- "Social-distancing must continue. Parishioners must maintain 6-feet distance between each other at all times except between members of the same family or household.
- Every person must bring and wear their own facemask during liturgies.
- Everyone must enter and exit only the main doors of the church.
- Everyone must use hand sanitizer upon entering and leaving the church.
- There is to be no social gathering in the church and narthex before and after Mass.
- Only 25% of how many the church can accommodate may be in the building at one time. For our parish, that amounts to approximately 300 people.
- Once everyone has left, the entire building must be sanitized before the next liturgy.

In his Decree, Bishop Vasquez has stated that the dispensation from participating in Sunday Mass continues to be in effect. He also encourages the following to *not* attend Mass and to remain at home:

- Those who are sick.
- Those who are 65 or older.
- Those who have been advised by health care workers or caregivers to not attend Mass.
- Those who sincerely believe that attending Mass will jeopardize their health or the health of a person with whom they reside.
- Those who sincerely believe that because of the limitations imposed by the temporary protocols attending Mass is not reasonable.

I am assembling a team to discuss how best we can implement this transition to resuming public Masses and will inform you later this week of whatever logistics have been decided upon. The addition of other Masses and times for the Sacrament of Reconciliation will also be discussed with this team. In the meantime, we will continue to live stream our daily Masses at 12:00 p.m., and 10:00 a.m. Sunday.

I look forward to seeing all of you, and worshipping with you in person once again!

God bless you, always, and in all ways.

Father Ed