

Downtown Dayton Catholic Parishes

Emmanuel Church
St. Joseph Church
Holy Trinity Church

May 20, 2020

Dear Parishioners:

Last week we sent you a copy of the letter from Archbishop Schnurr announcing his decision to resume the public celebration of the Mass beginning the final week of May. This is wonderful news! There has been a deep longing in all our hearts to be able to resume the public celebration of the Mass and for the faithful to receive the Eucharist. At the same time, we know that the virus is still with us and as we await the approval of a vaccine, it is essential that we care for one another in any social setting.

In St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians Chapter 12, St. Paul speaks of the members of the Church forming the Body of Christ. "If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy." "Now you are Christ's body, and individually parts of it." (12:26-27) I have been reflecting on this passage as I've worked with our Parish Leadership Team in establishing a set of guidelines for the opening of our churches for public worship. I can imagine that some will say the guidelines are too restrictive and others will say they are not strict enough. My hope is to come up with a set of guidelines that enable us to gather safely for worship, while at the same time we feel at home in our churches.

The safety precautions that I am sharing with you are meant to offer protection for our brothers and sisters. For example, I may not feel comfortable wearing a mask, but the reason I wear one is for the health of others. I could be a carrier of the virus and not know it. Which is the greater good, personal independence or the call to care for the other members of the Body of Christ? Emotions ride high on this question. One of the toughest lessons I had to learn growing up was that life isn't about me. Jesus gave us an example of this as he embraced the cross.

The most vulnerable among us, the elderly, the sick or their caregivers should continue to stay home and stay safe. The Archbishop has emphasized that all of the faithful continue to be dispensed from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass. It is not a sin to stay home. Spend time Sunday morning watching Mass on the television or the internet, honor the Lords day by praying the rosary or reading the bible.

For those who will be coming to Mass it is important to remember that the seating in church has been reduced significantly. Every other pew is blocked off and everyone outside a family unit needs to be six feet apart. So that we don't overcrowd the Sunday Mass I am encouraging parishioners to go to a Mass during the week instead of on Sunday. This is permitted because of the dispensation. To make this possible for more families, we are moving two of the 7:30 AM Masses to 6:00 PM during the week. (Tuesday, 6:00 PM at Holy Trinity and Thursday, 6:00 PM at

Emmanuel). Having an evening Mass will enable parishioners to go after work and with their families. The crowds will be smaller during the week, there will be music and the feel of a Sunday Mass. We will also continue the 12:00 Noon Mass at St. Joseph's. In the midst of these changes, please be aware that you may not be able to sit in the pew that has been "yours" for years. Think of it as an opportunity to get a different perspective of the church and a greater appreciation of its beauty.

Because the church will need to be cleaned more often we are looking for volunteers who can help clean the church. Please contact the parish office and leave your name and phone number if you are able to help.

Along with this letter, you will find a copy of the guidelines that have been established to guide our efforts to open the churches in our pastoral region. The first section looks at what we are doing to prepare for all of you. The second half is what you can do to help us all stay safe and healthy when coming to Mass. Please read through these guidelines and then put them on your refrigerator or family bulletin board to remind you of our plan of action.

**Our Pastoral Region will begin public worship on Tuesday, May 26, 2020
with the following schedule:**

Tuesday: 12:00 Noon Mass at St. Joseph and 6:00 PM Mass at Holy Trinity

Wednesday: 7:30 AM Mass at Emmanuel and 12:00 Noon at St. Joseph

Thursday: 12:00 Noon Mass at St. Joseph and 6:00 PM at Emmanuel

Friday: 7:30 AM Mass at Emmanuel and 12:00 Noon at St. Joseph

Saturday: 7:30 AM Mass at Emmanuel and 12:00 Noon at St. Joseph

Saturday Vigil: 4:30 PM Mass at St. Joseph and 5:15 PM Mass at Emmanuel

Sunday: 8:30 AM Mass at Holy Trinity, 10:00 AM Mass at St. Joseph, 10:30 AM Mass at Emmanuel, 11:30 AM Mass at Holy Trinity

Monday: 7:30 AM Mass at Holy Trinity and 12:00 Noon Mass at St. Joseph

I ask you to please be patient as we begin the process of opening our churches for public worship. The first full week will be a trial run for all of us. Our parish staff will be keeping an eye on the flow of the Masses and we will tweak things as needed to prepare for the next week. If that means adding a Mass on Sunday we will be ready to make that adjustment. I suspect this new way of life will be with us through the end of the year. Working together we will be able to safely give praise and thanksgiving to God for the many blessings we share.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Angelo Anthony, C.P.P.S.

Pastor

Guidelines for Resuming Public Worship
For the Downtown Dayton Catholic Parishes (Beginning May 26, 2020)

Preparing to Open the Church for Public Worship

- The Archbishop has continued the dispensation regarding the Sunday Mass obligation. The faithful are not obligated to attend public Mass at this time. They are asked to keep holy the sabbath by watching Mass on television or the internet, pray the rosary, reflect on Sacred Scripture or any spiritual practice to honor the Lord.
- Because of the dispensation, if someone wishes to participate in Mass they can do so any day of the week. We recommend attending a weekday Mass to lessen the Sunday crowd.
- The elderly or others with health issues should remain at home and watch Mass on the television or on the internet. Because of the dispensation there is no sin in staying home.
- Two evening Masses are scheduled (6:00 PM Tuesday at Holy Trinity and 6:00 PM Thursday at Emmanuel) so that families who desire to come to Mass can do so during the week rather than on the weekend to help reduce our Sunday Mass crowd. Music will be provided during these Masses.
- Every other pew in church has been roped off for social distancing.
- Church pews, rest rooms and touchpoints will be cleaned after Mass.
- Livestreaming will continue for one Sunday Mass per weekend at 10:00 A.M.
- Liturgical ministers will take precautions as they assist at Mass. Eucharistic Ministers will wear masks for the distribution of the Eucharist.
- Hand sanitizer and disposable masks will be available at the entrance of church.
- Hymnals and missalettes have been removed from the pews. Worship aids and weekly bulletins will be available at the entrances of Church. No leaflets are to be left in back of church.
- Holy water will not be in the holy water fonts. (Please see the priest or deacon if you would like holy water for home use.)
- Confessions will continue to be heard in the sacristy rather than the confessional.

Guidelines for the Public Celebration of the Mass for those who plan to attend.

- The faithful are asked to wash their hands before they leave home to come to Mass.
- The faithful are encouraged to bring their mask from home and to wear them in the church.
- A disposable worship handout with music will be distributed at Church.
- Members of the same family and couples may sit close together. Those not related to one another must observe the six-foot social distancing policy.
- All Liturgical Ministers must follow social distancing in the sanctuary.
- There will be no procession with the bread and wine, they will be placed on the credence table.
- Ciborium with hosts will be placed toward the edge of the altar on a corporal.
- The Precious Blood will not be shared.
- No physical contact at the Our Father. No Sign of Peace offered congregationally.
- **Holy Communion**
 - Eucharistic Ministers will wear masks and use hand sanitizer.
 - Communion line to approach the altar will be via the center aisle only; return to your pew via the side aisles.
 - Holy Communion will only be distributed by the host.
 - Holy Communion on the tongue is strongly discouraged. (Medical personnel emphasize that saliva is one of the worst fluids for transmission.)
- We cannot leave all at once. Spend a little time in prayer to reduce congestion in the aisles.
- Avoid gatherings outside of church & in the parking lots after Mass unless you can social distance.
- Ushers and greeters will be available to help things runs smoothly.