

May 20, 2020

Thanks be to God!

Our prayers have been answered, and we (tentatively) will be returning to public Masses beginning on **Saturday, at 4:30pm, on May 30, at St. Joseph, and at 7:00pm at St. Raphael.** (See schedule at end of this letter.) It is a joyous day, and I look forward to celebrating Mass with you soon! While this is cause for excitement, we must remember that we are still in the midst of a pandemic. As we look toward gathering again, there are protocols that must be in place.

My staff and I appreciate your patience and understanding with the changes that need to be made. While we know there are some directives that you may personally disagree with, please remember that we are here for the common good of all parishioners. Also, be aware that these protocols may be adjusted at any time.

Our ministry needs will look different as we return to public Masses. The **needed ministers** for each Mass at both churches and an explanation of any changes to that ministry is as follows:

- Sacristans are not needed at this time.
- Cantors are not needed at this time.
- Gift Bearers are not needed at this time.
- **Altar Server** (1) – Carry Cross, Tray, Ring bells
- **Lector** (1) - Lector will read both readings and intercessions. The Lector will not walk in the procession with the priest. Lector is to remove their mask while reading from ambo.
- Eucharistic Ministers are not needed at this time.
- **Ushers** (4-5) - Ushers **MUST** wear gloves and masks while actively serving. Duties include opening doors, taking temperatures, seating assistance, providing guidance during communion and dismissing the congregation at the end of Mass. This is an essential ministry!
- **COVID-19 Ministry Team** (4-6 on Saturday only) - Team members **MUST** wear gloves and masks that will be provided. They are responsible to spray down all touched surfaces after Mass. Further instructions will be provided. This essential ministry team is needed at both churches on Saturday evenings only.

If after reading through the above expectations for each ministry and the specific protocols, and you would like to volunteer for this ministry, please contact Darlene at the church office by May 26, 2020. **Public Masses cannot take place without our volunteers!**

Protocols

General Protocols

- Bishop Raica has dispensed everyone in our Diocese from their Sunday obligation until **September 6, 2020**. This does not mean we are dispensed from the 3rd Commandment to keep Holy the Sabbath. Remember to spend an hour in prayer on Sunday even if you cannot make it to Church.
- **Public Masses may not exceed 25% of church capacity. This equates to a limit of 75 parishioners at St. Joseph, and 65 parishioners at St. Raphael per Mass.** If we exceed our seating capacity, you may be asked to attend a different Mass. Weekday Masses will be available to attend, and can be attended in place of weekend Masses.

Prior to Mass

- **We recommend that you do not come to Mass if you are sick or in a category which makes you vulnerable.** You may also choose to come to Mass during the week if you are not comfortable with larger crowds (this would meet your Sunday obligation under the Bishop's dispensation.)
- **If you have any symptoms or a temperature over 100.4, you should not come to Mass** and should quarantine with the other members of your household for 14 days.

Arriving at Mass

- **All parishioners over the age of two are required to wear a mask.** We understand some people have medical reasons that make wearing a mask difficult. If you fall into this category, we ask that you loosely cover your mouth and nose while entering & exiting the church and while going to communion.
- A volunteer will take your temperature before entering the church.
- **Please put your weekly envelope in the basket as you enter the church** as there will not be a collection during Mass.
- **Every other pew will be roped off and there must be one full kneeler between parishioners that do not live in the same household.** Please respect our ushers as they seat you to comply with social distancing guidelines.
- We will have hand sanitizer as you enter the church, but we strongly recommend that you **bring your own hand sanitizer** as you will likely want it in the pew with you.

During Mass

- **If you are able, please leave your mask on.**
- **Holding hands during the Our Father is not permitted.**

Communion:

- Remember that you are never **required** to receive the Blessed Sacrament at any Mass. This is a great time to reflect on our preparedness for receiving our Lord by making sure we have gone to confession and are in the state of grace. Spiritual Communion is still an important prayer for everyone, receiving or not receiving. If not receiving, please proceed in line with your arms crossed over your chest.
- **We will have one line for communion that will be distributed after the concluding blessing and dismissal.** The celebrant will say to the whole assembly, "The Body of Christ." All respond, "Amen."
- Ushers will direct you where to go and when to exit your pew. Please remember to keep the 6 feet distancing. Communion may take a little longer, please be patient.
- **You are encouraged to receive in the hand.** Anyone who wishes to receive on the tongue will receive last.
- Gloves may not be worn when receiving the Eucharist in the hand.
- After people have received, they will immediately exit the church in a controlled and socially distanced manner and say a prayer of Thanksgiving in the car.

There will be more details coming as we get back into the swing of things, but **these are the expectations at this time. If you are not comfortable with or wish not to comply with these requirements, the Bishop has offered a dispensation from Mass until September 6, 2020. You may also continue to watch/listen to live-streamed liturgies. Also, please remember to be respectful of those volunteers who are working to keep all of our parishioners safe and healthy.** I look forward to joining you in public liturgies again soon!

May God bless you,



Fr. Rubén Darío Muñoz Jiménez

St. Joseph (Tentative) Mass Schedule beginning on Saturday, May 30, 2020

Weekday Schedule		Weekend Schedule	
Thursday	11:00am	Saturday	4:30pm
Friday	11:00am	Sunday	11:00am

St. Raphael (Tentative) Mass Schedule beginning on Saturday, May 30, 2020

Weekday Schedule		Weekend Schedule	
Tuesday	11:00am	Saturday	7:00pm
Wednesday	11:00am	Sunday	8:30am

Sacrament of Reconciliation is available throughout the week by appointment.