



Dear Parishioners of Saint Edward the Confessor,

PUBLIC MASSES TO RESUME UNDER RESTRICTED CONDITIONS ON THE WEEKEND
OF MAY 30th/31st

As Governor Baker is now permitting the reopening of Houses of Worship in Massachusetts, we must prepare our parish church here at Saint Edward's for a "new normal" which will continue until COVID-19 is fully under control. At the direction of the Most Reverend Robert McManus, Bishop of Worcester, Roman Catholic Churches in the Diocese reopen to the public for worship on May 23, but we plan to reopen our Church on the Feast of Pentecost which falls on the weekend of May 30th/31st. **Our Masses on the Feast of Pentecost are scheduled at 4:00 PM on Saturday and at 9:00 AM. & 11:00AM on Sunday. Doors will open 25 minutes before Mass time.**

The daily Mass will be in the main church at 8 am on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and also will be live-streamed to Facebook and YouTube.

While the Church may be reopening for public worship, what is most important to remember is that just because public worship is permitted does not mean that participation is risk-free. Rather, the obligation to participate in Sunday Mass is still lifted by Bishop McManus until December 31, 2020. The greatest concern of all the clergy of the Diocese is the health and wellbeing of our parishioners. Therefore, all Masses will continue to be live-streamed and available to those parishioners who feel safer worshipping from home.

We cannot expect to be able to worship in quite the same manner as before. We must be prudent in observing all necessary precautions to avoid contracting the virus while participating in our liturgical celebration. Unfortunately, the capacity of 40%, that was announced by the authorities, will not work in our small parish church. Therefore, the church will only accommodate about 42 people per Mass.

During the next week, the church will be measured and marked to facilitate the observance of social distancing practices. When the Church is reopened, parishioners who want to attend Mass will be restricted to entering by the front door. Doors will remain open to avoid touching them. The handicap entrance will be available only for those parishioners who require it. The cry room will not be open.

All who attend Mass will be asked to sanitize their hands upon entering the church and to continue to wear a face mask throughout the liturgy, with the brief exception of removing it to receive communion. Those attending will be directed where to sit by an usher.

Missals/Hymnals will not be available for use during Mass and only the Cantor will be allowed to sing. The bulletins are available online at <http://stedwardconf.org>

There will not be a procession with the gifts at the preparation rite. Collection baskets will be kept at the entrances of the church rather than passed during the Mass.

The sign of peace will be suspended. The communion procession will be regulated by an usher who will invite communicants to come one row at a time. Communion will be ministered by the clergy only and can be received only in the hand during Mass. Those who insist, at their risk and that of the minister, to receive on the tongue will have to position themselves at the end of the communion line.

At the Dismissal, the ushers will invite the congregation to exit the church row by row in an orderly manner so as to maintain safe distances and avoid unnecessary contact.

All other parish activities other than worship will remain suspended at this time until further notice.

During the pandemic we will communicate with the parishioners through the following ways:

Our parish website: <https://stedwardconf.org/>

Our parish Facebook page: St Edward the Confessor Westminster

Instagram: st.edtc

Flocknote

YouTube channel: st.edwardtheconfessorwestminster

The parish bulletin (available online through the parish webpage)

Praying for you and your wellbeing at this time, and for an end to this pandemic.

Sincerely,

Fr. Juan