



Catholic Churches of
St. Lawrence-St. Gertrude-St. Theresa

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Dear Parishioners,

It has been an interesting and challenging time in our parish life for the last few weeks. I want to assure you that I have been praying for you daily and that I miss you terribly whenever I celebrate the Eucharist without you present physically. I am happy to report that we will be able to begin to celebrate together again soon – with some restrictions, of course.

I am enclosing a letter from Bishop Kagan which outlines the ways we will go about celebrating as a community of faith for the time being. I want to highlight the fact that **Bishop Kagan has NOT rescinded the dispensation to attend Mass.** He encourages anyone who is hesitant or may be fearful of being part of a gathering to stay home. Mass will continue to be available through livestreaming and certainly on television.

I also want to encourage the social distancing necessary to protect ourselves and others during this time of heightened awareness. We will have cordoned off every other pew in each of the parish churches. Please respect these boundaries for the sake of one another. Also, as we proceed in the communion line, please be aware of the distancing necessary – 6 ft. minimum. After Mass, please avoid congregating to visit in the church or outside, but rather go your way as soon as possible.

Ushers: It will be important that you are at the church one half hour before Mass begins. It will be your duty to direct people in being seated appropriately in alternating pews, family groups together. I ask that you **do not hand out bulletins before Mass**, parishioners are to pick them up individually, either before or after Mass. As there will be no offertory procession, a basket will be available at the entrance of each church for your offertory contribution. **Ushers, please take that basket to the sacristy when Mass begins.**

Readers will resume their duties as normal. We will have **no servers** until further notice, nor will we have offertory procession, so **no gift-bearers**, either. There will be **musicians**, but no choir for now. **Money counters**, please resume your duties scheduled. Thank you all for your service to our community.

In addition, I ask that we keep the crying rooms **only for parents with infants** and that no more than four people are in the crying room at once.

As we take these small steps back to a more normal way of celebrating our faith life together, please be patient with the restrictions and respectful of one another. Continue to pray together at home and trust in our loving God. It is in his dying and rising that we have life. Let us joyfully live in His love each day.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call me: 701-301-0609.

Know of my continued prayer and my love,

Fr. Dennis Schafer, pastor