

ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF SAINTS PETER AND PAUL AND ASSUMPTION

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Dear Parishioners,

What a long, strange trip it's been! But we are at the point in the journey when we can start to look realistically at opening our parish homes once again.

The Archdiocese and civic authorities have given us guidelines that **MUST** be observed:

1. **MASKS** must be worn by the faithful at all times when in the church. Hand sanitizers will be available at the 1 door to be used to enter the church. A Minister of Hospitality will guide people to seats that have been appropriately socially distanced for individuals and groups of two or more. Please follow the directions of these ministers – they have been trained to help us through this difficult and uncertain moment.

2. When receiving **COMMUNION**, masks are to be pulled down, the Body of Christ is to be received in the hand, placed in the mouth, and the mask replaced to cover the mouth and nose. If the minister of Communion touches the hand of a communicant he will stop to sanitize his hands before resuming the distribution of Communion. It will be extremely important for everyone to follow the instructions of the clergy and Ministers of Hospitality when forming the procession for the reception of Communion.

3. The **COLLECTION** will be taken up in the usual way, using baskets with long handles.

4. **RESTROOMS WILL NOT BE AVAILABLE.**

5. Coffee and cake will continue to be suspended until further notice.

6. **SOCIAL DISTANCING** requires that we severely limit the number of people admitted into the churches for Mass: 141 at St. Peter and 50 at Assumption. Therefore, when we are permitted to celebrate Mass on the weekends we will **TEMPORILY** implement a new schedule of Masses to accommodate our parish's needs.

A. Since the 5:00 and 6:00 Masses at St. Peter are the least attended, they will be suspended.

B. This will allow for Mass to be celebrated at 4:00 in Assumption Church and at 4:15 in Assumption Hall.

C. On Sunday morning Mass will be celebrated at 10:00 in Assumption Church and at 10:15 in Assumption Hall.

D. Mass will be celebrated at 12:00, as usual, in St. Peter with seating designed to accommodate the need for social distancing.

E. An additional Spanish Mass will be celebrated at 12:00 on Sunday in Assumption Church to ease the crowding that is typically characteristic of the 5:30 Sunday evening Mass.

F. The 5:30 Mass in Assumption Church will be celebrated as usual with additional seating available in Assumption Hall if needed.

PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT IF/WHEN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE COMING FOR MASS REACHES THE CAPACITY LEVEL, THOSE ARRIVING LATER MUST BY LAW BE TURNED AWAY.

PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT THESE CHANGES ARE TEMPORARY AND WILL BE USED ONLY UNTIL WE ARE ABLE TO OPEN OUR CHURCHES COMPLETELY.

These unique times demand creative thinking, a willingness to experiment and adapt, and, in the context of our faith, the patience of Job!

Thank you for your continued support of our parish community. The concern you have demonstrated for each other, the sacrifices you have made to support our food pantry, and the time you have invested in private prayer when our churches have been open are all a great source of inspiration and strength as well as justifiable pride.

If the Scriptures tell us anything, it is that our God stands with us always and everywhere. Even when we lose the most important gifts we treasure, God proves to be faithful! As we anticipate the day when the restrictions we now need become a thing of the past, let us endure our share of hardships demanded of us as the children of God and let the Spirit living within us lead us forward.

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Michael W. Cichon
Pastor