



St. Matthew the Apostle Church
335 Dover Chester Rd.
Randolph, NJ 07869

June 9, 2020

Dear Parish Family,

Hopefully you were able to see the news on our Facebook page in regards to being open for masses beginning this weekend. I am overjoyed that I will be able to see some of your smiling faces (or what I hope are smiling faces behind your masks). As we begin to see our doors open, I know that many of you have expressed your concerns in coming back right away with ongoing concerns in regards to Covid-19. I understand your concerns for the safety of your family and yourself. I remind you, currently the obligation to attend mass in person is suspended and the option to live stream will continue.

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ is this weekend. How fitting that our doors are opening again on this holy day! Over the many weeks of isolation, I have been consistently hearing of the desire to receive the Eucharist. While Spiritual Communion has been a way to deepen our faith, it is not the same thing as being able to receive Christ, truly present, in the Eucharist. St. Thomas Aquinas, Doctor of the Church suggested this feast to Pope Urban IV to create a feast focused solely on the Holy Eucharist, emphasizing the joy of the Eucharist being the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ. As Catholics, this is what we believe and there will be great joy in welcoming you back to our Parish community as you are able to receive Holy Communion.

That being said, there will be guidelines in place for the health and safety of our Parishioners and staff. Included in this email is a comprehensive guide to changes that will be implemented as we return to St. Matthew's. The two main precautions that we continue to follow are maintaining social distance of 6 feet from others and wearing a mask/face covering. Both of these rules will remain in effect. If you are not wearing a mask, you will be denied entry. I have heard all the arguments with regards to masks. While you may disagree with them, this is the rule and it will be enforced. We encourage you to bring your own hand sanitizer as well. While we do have a supply, if you can help us preserve that supply for the long-term it would be greatly appreciated.

The coming weekend will be a test. Some of the procedures may be tweaked as we learn what works and what doesn't. There are auxiliary plans ready if needed. I ask for your continue patience as we adapt and adjust. The last thing to note is a shift for the liturgical schedule. We will live stream masses 5:00 pm on Saturday and 9:30 am on Sunday. If you are plan on being in attendance this weekend, ***the 9:30 am mass is livestream ONLY***. It will time for cleaning the church and preparing for 11:00 am mass.

I cannot wait to see you and I look forward to hearing the creaking pews again. This weekend is exciting, please be patient, there will be kinks in the plan. We will adjust for the coming weeks.

God Bless,
Fr. Brian