

Message from Msgr. Benwell

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The response of parishes to COVID-19 has evolved over the past six months and will surely continue to evolve. St. Mary's has seen a slow, but steady, return of parishioners to weekend Masses, and as we come nearer to our limit of 150 people in the church at any one time, I think it appropriate to add another Mass on Sundays.

Beginning, then, on October 4, Mass will now be celebrated on Sunday mornings at 7:30 and 11:15 am. Mass will continue to be celebrated on Saturday at 4 pm, but will *no longer* be celebrated on Sunday at 10 am. The gap of time between the two Sunday Masses is necessary in order for the church to be professionally cleaned after the first Mass and before the second.

The 4:00 and 11:15 Masses only will be live-streamed on the parish Facebook page and made immediately available afterward on the parish website. Holy Communion will continue to be brought to cars in front of the church for a limited period of time after all Masses: from 4:40 to 4:50 pm on Saturdays and from 8:00 to 8:10 and 11:45 to 11:55 am on Sundays.

Despite restrictions placed on parish life by the pandemic, much is still happening at St. Mary's and in the Diocese of Metuchen. Please be sure to regularly check the parish bulletin and website; the bulletin is available in the church narthex and on the website.

Finally, Sunday, October 4, is the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. I will be blessing pets that afternoon at 12:30 in the grassy area near the statue of St. Francis. I hope to meet and bless many of our non-human parishioners there.

My prayerful good wishes for a safe and blessed week.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Msgr.