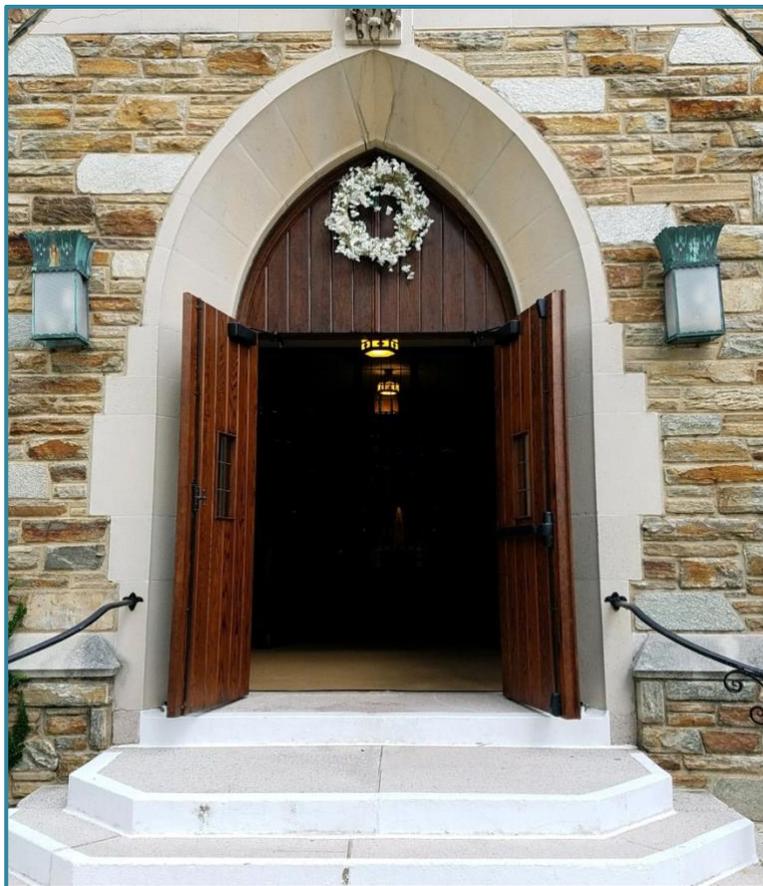


# WELCOME HOME!

## GUIDELINES FOR THE REOPENING OF THE CHURCH AND THE RESUMPTION OF PUBLIC MASSES



SHRINE OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH

JUNE 2020

## INTRODUCTION

In mid-March, we were all faced with the seriousness of the coronavirus pandemic. Out of utmost caution for the health and safety of our parishioners, we shuttered our church building, closed our school, and suspended our programs. Like other Catholic communities in our Archdiocese and around the country, we made the difficult decision to suspend public Masses.

Our parish school quickly established online learning for the students. Our religious education programs and Bible studies went virtual. Charitable efforts continued and, as usual, you responded with great generosity to the increased need. Parish committees continued to meet over computer screens. You continued to support this parish through online giving, direct deposits, and even thoughtful letters with funds enclosed. We established a “telecare” ministry to contact our isolated senior parishioners. I am very grateful for the generosity of time, talent, and treasure which has sustained our parish community.

Most importantly, our worship of almighty God has not abated. We set up cameras in church to live-stream Masses to your homes. Even the holiest days of our liturgical year were celebrated well, though with a handful of ministers and empty pews. Funerals and weddings -- in very small numbers -- were celebrated. Graveside services were prayed. First Communion and Confirmation liturgies were postponed to the fall.

My brother priests and I miss you. Please be assured that you have continued to be in our daily prayers and held in mind during the daily celebration of the Mass.

Now, by the grace of God, we come to a time when we can reopen our church and can resume public worship. *This will be very gradual with phased increases in harmony with civil directives and archdiocesan guidelines.* Rest assured that we have been in constant communication with authorities in the District of Columbia and Montgomery County. Archdiocesan guidelines have been promulgated to all parishes. We have consulted local doctors and reviewed CDC guidelines. And our own Parish Worship Commission has met regularly to study how all of this will be safely implemented.

**We will resume public Masses the weekend of June 20 and 21.** The following pages will give you more detailed information. Please read them carefully. Things will look differently for a while. I ask your cooperation as we all have to adapt to a “new normal.” Check the website often -- we will continue to make adjustments as new policies arise.

It may take a while to return to our usual practices, but one thing is certain -- this parish is “a welcoming Catholic Community whose people encounter Christ in the Eucharist and continue to serve Him in our neighbor.”

*Fr. Bill*

Father William Foley, Pastor



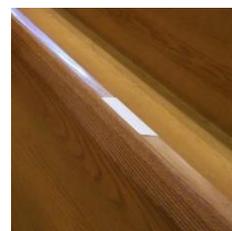
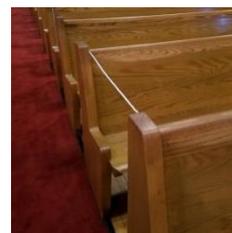
# WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU RETURN TO MASS

## PLANNING TO COME TO MASS

- ❖ According to the District of Columbia directives, currently the number of people who may assemble is very small – we are limited to ten people, including the presider and ministers. We will increase that number in Phase Two (50 people) and Phase Three (250 people).
- ❖ Archbishop Gregory has extended the dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass. This dispensation is in effect “until further notice.”
- ❖ Beginning June 20, our temporary Mass schedule will be as follows:  
Weekend: 5:30 (Saturday Vigil); Sunday at 10:00 AM, 1:00 PM, and 5:30 PM  
Weekday: 5:30 PM  
This schedule permits for a cleaning of the church after every Mass.
- ❖ We will continue to live-stream all our Masses. These are accessible through our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BlessedSacramentDC/>
- ❖ Please “reserve” a space in advance – ask for a specific date and Mass time. To reserve a space, click on the link that will be posted on the Blessed Sacrament website and in the Flocknotes. Reservations will “close” every Friday at 4:00 PM or when each Mass has reached capacity. As our permitted numbers increase, we will change to a more automated system online.
- ❖ Please do not come to Mass if you are sick in any way, e.g., sore throat, cough, fever, etc. (If you had a reservation, please let Rosalie know so that we can allow someone else to come.)

## ENTERING THE CHURCH

- ❖ Each person (over the age of two) who enters the church must wear a mask or scarf which covers their mouth and nose.
- ❖ Please use the hand sanitizer which will be available at the main entrance.
- ❖ Please use the main door to enter. (Please alert us if you will require the handicap entrance door off the parking lot.) Weather permitting, we will have doors propped open so that you might avoid touching door handles. Of course, all doors will be open as exits.
- ❖ Some pews will be roped off in order to assure social distancing. Please follow the directions of the hospitality ministers.
- ❖ To increase social distancing, please sit at opposite ends of the alternate pews. A white tape on the back of the pew offers a guide to this.



## DURING THE MASS

- ❖ Hymnals and missalettes have been removed from the pews. Please pick up a worship aid when you enter and take it home or dispose of it when you leave. Music will be minimal.
- ❖ Ushers will not pass the basket at the Offertory. Please drop your envelope in a single collection location which will be near the front entrance.
- ❖ We will not shake hands at the Sign of Peace.
- ❖ The Communion procession will be single file in the main aisle. Please maintain a six-foot distance between you and the person in front of you. (There will be some reminders on the floor). Remove any gloves.
- ❖ Communion will be distributed only as the Body of Christ and only in the hand. Please receive the host in your hand, then step to the side, lower your mask momentarily, and consume the host.



## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- ❖ Please maintain a safe distance as you depart. It will be great to see everyone, but please resist the urge to congregate before or after Mass.
- ❖ The restroom will be open, but please use only in an emergency.
- ❖ Please gather up any papers or tissues before you leave your pew.
- ❖ Please leave your mask on until you have returned to your car or away from church property.



***THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PATIENCE AND COOPERATION!***

*The liturgy is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all the Church's power flows. For the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made children of God, by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's Supper.*

*The liturgy in its turn moves the faithful, filled with "the paschal sacraments," to be "one in holiness." It prays that "they may hold fast in their lives to what they have grasped by their faith." The renewal in the Eucharist of the covenant between the Lord and his people draws the faithful into the compelling love of Christ and sets them on fire. From the liturgy, therefore, and especially from the Eucharist, grace is poured forth upon us as from a fountain. The liturgy is the source for achieving, in the most effective way possible, human sanctification and God's glorification, the end to which all the Church's other activities are directed.*

*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 10 -- Second Vatican Council, December 4, 1963*