



Dear Parishioners of St. Andrew's,

I expect many of you have heard the good news that we will be able to have public Masses in our church once again, beginning next weekend, May 23-24, 2020, when we will celebrate the Ascension of Our Lord! All the clergy and staff of the parish are very much looking forward to seeing you at Mass again and we will be working very hard this week to prepare for your return.

Unfortunately, things won't be quite 'back to normal' yet in this first phase of our reopening. We are limited to a maximum of 50% capacity in our church, and with the requirements for social distancing that percentage will be lower. We estimate that we'll have room for about 100 people in the pews of the church. The Chapel and Social Hall will be closed to the public.

Entrance to the church and social hall will be on a first come, first served basis, and it will be necessary for people to arrive at the church at least 30 minutes prior to each Mass, so that everyone can be screened with a few simple questions and seated in an orderly way.

I would ask that those who are in the vulnerable age category for the coronavirus and those who are immunocompromised please consider not attending Mass in person yet, as there is still some risk of infection. The obligation to attend the Eucharistic celebration on Sundays and holy days is dispensed by Bishop Knestout, so a couple of alternatives for those in vulnerable categories are the following: to attend one of the daily Masses (Monday through Friday at Noon), which should be less crowded, or continue to participate in our Mass via livestream, which will be available for the 10 am Mass on Sundays.

Our staff has prepared the following information sheet to help you be well-informed before coming back to St. Andrew's next weekend and to know just what to expect when we are gathered together once again. I ask everyone to please read this carefully, and for those who will come to Mass next weekend to bring a bit of patience and good humor with you!

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Father Kevin".

Father Kevin

### **What you need to know:**

The Phase I Mass schedule is:

**Saturdays at 5:30 p.m.; Sundays at 7:00 a.m.; 10:00 a.m.; and 1:00 p.m.**

**The 10:00 a.m. Sunday Mass will to be livestreamed.**

**Daily Masses will resume Monday – Friday at noon.**

Everyone is invited to participate in one of the parish Masses. However, if you are feeling sick, have a fever, have developed a new cough or have developed a new shortness of breath, if someone in your household has been sick or has come into contact with a person with COVID 19, please do not come to Mass.

### **Instructions for attending Mass:**

- You must enter the church through the Jefferson Street entrance or the lower level of Parish Center near Roanoke Catholic School.
- Try to arrive at Mass 30 minutes early to answer health-screening questions and be seated according to safe distance protocols.
- **All present for the liturgy (ages three and older) must wear a face covering.** *You will not be able to enter the church building without a face covering and it must remain in place until you leave the building (see **Instructions for receiving Holy Communion.**)*
- A parish volunteer will seat you according to social distancing guidelines.
- There will be no nursery, no hymnal, no worship aides, no Children's Liturgy of the Word, no choir, no bulletins, no Christian Formation, and no coffee & donuts until further notice.
- We will continue the practice of **refraining from holding hands during the Lord's Prayer and shaking hands during the sign of peace.**

### **Instructions for receiving Holy Communion:**

- Designated parish volunteers will direct the communion line, row by row, to ensure social distancing.
- Communion **will not be distributed by the cup** until further notice.
- The faithful are **strongly encouraged** to receive Holy Communion in the hand. Upon presenting yourself for communion **you must wear your face covering**, place one hand under the other *making a throne for the King*, as St Cyril says. After receiving the host, you will step aside, lower or lift your face covering, consume the host, replace the face covering and return to your seat.
- Holy Communion may not be distributed outside of a public Mass, except by a priest, under special circumstances. No one will be able to take Holy Communion home to a loved one.

### **Dismissal:**

- After the final blessing, volunteers will dismiss the faithful row by row.
- As you exit, there will be volunteers with baskets to collect your offertory contribution.

For the most up to date information, please check our website at [www.standrewsva.org](http://www.standrewsva.org).