

Things look different... What's going on?

You'll notice some modifications as you come to Mass this weekend, here at St. Pius X, so I wanted to give you a little run-down of what we've done, and why we've done it. All of these adjustments have been initiated at the direction of the Diocese of Columbus, and as a result of the recent statements, and revised directives, from Governor Mike DeWine and the Centers for Disease Control.

- 1) First, you'll notice that that bothersome mauve tape, which had been marking-off every other pew, has now been retired. (Yay!) That unsightly tape was removed since we are moving into a new model for pew-seating.
- 2) This new seating model uses every pew in the church, with people seated according to a **staggered plan**, throughout the church. This was done to allow for more folks to join us for Mass *in the church* (and so we can begin to move away from using the Msgr. Funk Parish Family Center for "overflow" Mass seating). Eventually – one day soon, I hope – we won't need to send people outside of the church to attend Mass!
- 3) By now, I'm sure you've also spotted the little crosses posted in front of certain pew seats. Each cross designates a single seat on the facing-pew, that is an available option. These crosses are arranged in a way that provides appropriate spacing between each group/individual. Each of these specially-distanced options are then staggered across each pew, in order to provide for a modified COVID-19 buffer between groups.
- 4) While this model uses *every* pew in the church, and increases our church's seating capacity, it still also provides for an adapted form of social-distancing. This new configuration begins our *gradual* move back to full use of our pews, in a cautious and deliberate way. (**SPECIAL THANKS** to our elementary school students who kindly provided the unique and beautiful designs for each of our seat-designating crosses!)
- 5) Beginning Wednesday, June 2nd the State of Ohio will lift the requirement for masks/face coverings. Until then, we will continue to encourage everyone who comes to Mass to wear one – even if you've been fully vaccinated. After June 2nd, some people may prefer to continue wearing a mask. If you are one of those folks, please know that you are most welcome to maintain the practice, for as long as you wish.
- 6) With the COVID-19 vaccines becoming more-widely available, and with the proper medical authorities noting that we have moved past the worst of the pandemic, **the Catholic Bishops of Ohio (including Bishop Brennan) have decided that it is time to reinstate the general obligation for Catholics to attend Mass on Sundays (or at the Saturday Evening Vigil Mass)**. This will take effect in each of the Dioceses of Ohio on the first weekend of **June (5th/6th)**. *Please see the reverse of this page to read the statement of the Catholic Bishops of Ohio, in full.* (After this date, we will be phasing-out our live-streaming of Masses, once our elementary school's academic year comes to an end.)
- 7) Please note: We will continue to observe certain precautions which are still being encouraged by health care experts from the State of Ohio, and the Ohio State University. These precautions include a continued suspension of the Sign of Peace, Holy Water in the church fonts, and distribution of the Precious Blood.

As always, I will do my very best to communicate **what** we are doing, here at St. Pius X, and *why* we are doing it. Thank you for your continued cooperation, patience, and prayers!

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Dave