



St. Matthias
CATHOLIC CHURCH

Dear Parishioners,

We are now 6 months into the pandemic! I am glad that many of us are now used to our different routines, staying healthy, and perhaps more grateful for the many things we have taken for granted in the past. I want to use this opportunity as a way of reaffirming our covid-19 policies as well as slightly updating them.

- 1) Please continue to do **the basics**: wear masks, social distance as much as possible, wash hands, and use hand sanitizer.
- 2) The **dispensation from the Sunday Obligation** to attend mass, originally set through Sunday, September 13, has been extended indefinitely by Bishop Brennan and the other Ohio bishops.
- 3) **Haitian mass** is now resumed. Haitian mass takes place every Sunday afternoon at 1:30 pm EXCEPT the first Sunday of the month. On those first Sundays, we invite members of the Haitian Catholic Community to attend a parish mass.
- 4) The **11 am mass is nearing its capacity**. For those who normally attend that mass, please consider attending the Haitian mass at 1:30 pm on Sunday afternoons. (Note: Haitian mass is not offered the first Sunday of the month.) Until our Haitian priest returns, I will preside and do most of the prayers in English. With much fewer people present and more space between us, some singing will be permitted.
- 5) **Music and singing** at the parish masses (Saturday 5 pm, Sunday 9 am and 11 am) is now limited to the cantor alone. I know it is hard not to sing along, especially if we know the words, but with increased mass attendance and some of our elderly parishioners attending these masses, this will minimize the risk of spreading the virus through the air. Singing is higher risk than the spoken word.
- 6) The **sign of peace** will continue to be suspended. I know many of you have been finding ways of sharing peace with those around you without touching or hand shaking. That is most welcome!
- 7) The **communion cups** will not be used in the near future and, due to lack of space near the sanctuary, communion will continue to be **distributed after mass** at the weekend parish masses. (Daily masses and Ethnic masses may distribute communion at the proper time.)

8) The **Church will continue to remain open Sunday afternoons** for personal prayer until 3 pm. Note that the Haitian mass will take place at 1:30 pm most Sunday afternoons. Also, Nigerian mass takes place at 3 pm on the 3rd Sunday of the month.

9) In order to give us time to sanitize the church and know who is in our building at all times, we will continue to **unlock the doors 30 minutes prior to the start of mass.**

10) **Thank you** to the parishioners for your understanding and continued support of St. Matthias. Also, a big thanks to those parishioners who have been assigned cleaning duties after masses. It means a lot.

As we look ahead to the next 6 months of the pandemic, let us keep each other in prayer. Let us also hope for the best, knowing that many things are beyond our control. Thankfully, we do not have to be in control, for our God is still guiding history until the day when Christ is 'all in all.'

Fr. Tony