

A Wednesday Word About Reopening

Good day everyone. I welcome you and all our viewer to our weekly Wednesday Word of Encouragement. During my time with you today I wish to bring you all up to date with the many recent announcements made by our Premier of Ontario, Mr. Doug Ford and our Bishop, Ronald Peter Fabbro.

As Father David mentioned in his homily and as I mentioned in my Pastor's Pen last weekend, we both made the announcement that we were re-opening our churches June 27th & 28th. Following a webinar session this past Monday, I was informed that the receipt of the PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) has been delayed a week and may not be here until after June 28th. For this reason we are now opening our churches on the first weekend of July, July 4th and 5th. Please note: there will be no weekday masses for the months of July and August. Father David and I will continue to celebrate weekday masses in private and we promise all those who have requested mass intentions that they will be offered at the Altar.

Our churches will **re-open the weekend of July 4th and 5th**. However there is one slight change for one of our churches. That being Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church. In order for us to offer the Mass for our Slovak Community as a whole according to Diocesan and government regulations, the Mass will be celebrated across the street from the Church in the Slovak Heritage Centre. In addition to our parishioners from Sts. Cyril & Methodius attending Mass in the Centre, parishioners from our other Families of Parishes will be welcome give the extra space.

In order for me to open all our four churches, and in order to practice the government regulated guidelines on social distancing, safety, protection and the sanitizing of every worship space before and after each Mass I have had to move our Family of Parishes to a new weekend Mass schedule.

The new Weekend Mass schedule, effective July 4th and 5th will be as follows:

On Saturday afternoons and evening we will have three Masses.

5:00 p.m. Mass at Most Precious Blood.

5:00 p.m. Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe

7:00 p.m. Mass at St. Theresa's.

On Sunday mornings we will have 5 Masses

9:00 a.m. Mass at St. Theresa's.

10:00 a.m. Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe

11:00 a.m. Mass at Most Precious Blood.

11:30 a.m. Mass at Slovak Heritage Centre(across the street from Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church)

12:30 p.m. Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe (Spanish Mass).

While regulations permit us to have 30% of our regular capacity, due to distancing requirements, we expect that our actual capacities will be less than 30%.

In the absence of Father Len, I have asked Father Tom Janisse to celebrate one mass a week at the Slovak Heritage Centre and Most Precious Blood Church on a 4 week rotation.

PLEASE NOTE: This new Mass schedule is effective now until the end of August. Your Parish Team will be reviewing this Mass schedule in the middle of August and by that time we will wait and see what state we are in given this pandemic. I will keep you all posted.

I want to be very clear and honest with you. The celebration of Masses will not be the same as we were all used to. In order to re-open I have needed to be obedient to our Bishop as he has placed before all of us Directions and recommendations for the Re-opening of our Churches. Bishop Fabbro has clearly stated, that “through the document we received, we want to ensure that we reopen our churches in a manner which is prudent and responsible and which allows for reverent celebrations of the Eucharist.

The Bishop realizes that many may be still uncertain or unable to join us. For that reason. Our Bishop has extended the dispensation from the Sunday obligation to all faithful of the Diocese, at least until the First Sunday of Advent, November 29th.

The following directions will be implemented:

1. Physical Distancing – a physical distancing of two meters (six feet) is to be strictly maintained.
2. Temperature Monitoring – Please take your temperature before coming to church. If your temperature is above 37.5 C or 100 F you will not be permitted to enter Church.
3. I am appealing for many volunteers to help us with the re-opening process. You may ask, Father, what do you need volunteers for? We need many volunteers to help with the screening process as people arrive for Mass. We need volunteers to assist in sanitizing the churches after each mass. I need one volunteer for each mass to monitor and look after the safety of those using washroom facilities. I need one volunteer per mass at St. Theresa’s to monitor hand railings and one to monitor the use of the elevator. These volunteers are in addition to the ushers who will have specific duties.
4. All Washrooms will be closely looked after and disinfected after each use. Please only use them if you really need to.
5. Each Church will have Disinfectant Hand Sanitizer. I highly recommend that everyone wear a mask to church and throughout the liturgy. Please bring your own mask to church.
6. There will be no Holy water Fonts available.
7. I ask that each parishioner be kind and obey the direction that will be given to them by the Ushers, Staff and Volunteers.
8. There will be no music, no singing, no use of hymnals, or prayer books during the Mass.
9. We will monitor very closely the use of the elevator and hand railings at St. Theresa’s Church with proper disinfectant after each use.
10. If you are planning to return to a Mass, YOU MUST MAKE A RESERVATION by calling Liz at the Main office at Most Precious Blood. Once you arrive to church, you will be directed to go through a screening process which includes a few questions and the need of your name and contact information. Following this an Usher will usher you to your place. Please note: You can only make one reservation per week for you and your family members that live in the same household. In other words, it is not permissible to book Pew 55 at OLOG for 4 weeks in a row.
11. For this two month period, the priest will not require the use of altar servers as we follow the rules of social distancing. To all my altar servers, I ask that you stay with your parents and family during these opening phase.
12. Bishop Fabbro has given us permission to celebrate General Absolution periodically . We will be moving to this Form to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. There will be no individual confessions celebrated at Most Precious Blood and OLOG Churches for the months of July and

August. If desperately needed, I ask that you contact Father David or me to make private arrangements to celebrate the sacrament.

13. You are encouraged to arrive early for Mass, since welcoming, screening and seating will take more time than usual.
14. The Offertory collection is omitted at the usual time. If you wish to make your weekly offering you may do so at the end of Mass by dropping it off in the collection baskets which will be at the entrances of the Church. Again, for those who choose not to attend Mass I cannot thank you enough for mailing in or dropping your church donation off.
15. For all funerals, Baptisms, Weddings we are allowed the 30% church capacity. Once again, this will be dependent on our ability to meet distancing requirements.
16. There will be no published weekly bulletin. All announcements will be posted on our Facebook and Website Page.
17. The Family of Parishes Office remains closed until we are notified by the Diocese to re-open. However, Liz will be in the office from Tuesday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. to take your reservations for Mass and any other requests.
18. Following Mass the Priest celebrating the Mass will not be available for any reason. Following the Mass there cannot be any socializing of any kind with one another, presider, deacons, and Team members. Please proceed directly to your cars following our celebrations when directed to do so.

As someone said, Our Spiritual house has become a house of rules. Well, We are doing everything possible to keep it a house of prayer with the utmost importance of safety and protection of those choosing to return to church. To those who feel 'I'm ready to return, but not yet,' That is perfectly alright and understandable. Whether you are ready or whether you are not ready it is important that you make the right decision for your health and the health and safety of your families. Each and every one of you are a great gift to North Central Windsor Catholic Family of Parishes.

Let us continue to hold each other up in thoughts and prayer. Let us pray for a vaccine to this virus.

God Bless you all.

Good night.

Fr. David