

17 May 2020

Dear St. Charles Parishioner:

On this the Sixth Sunday of Easter we also mark the ninth week of our pandemic shutdown. Following the directives issued by the State of Ohio, we will gradually return to the public celebration of Mass, effective next week, beginning Monday, May 25, Memorial Day. Here's what's going to happen. Please read this letter carefully and then let me know what you think.

First of all, the obligation to attend Mass is still suspended; attend Mass only if *you* choose to do so. No one is required to attend weekend Mass, at least for the next several months. Please do not come to Mass if you are running a temperature or if you are coughing. Furthermore, if you are in the “high risk” category (above the age of 60, suffer from diabetes, have heart or immunity concerns, or have undergone chemotherapy, I particularly encourage you to STAY AT HOME). We will continue to “livestream” a Mass at 11:00am every day, Sunday to Saturday, for those who stay at home.

For those who choose to attend Mass at St Charles, you will be required to wear a face mask while in church. You are also expected to follow “social distancing” (six feet apart) while seated in the pews and when you approach the altar for Communion. You may sit in the pews marked with green tape; do not sit in the pews marked with red tape. Communion will only be given IN THE HAND.

Every reasonable precaution will be taken for your safety. The church will be sanitized after each Mass. Hand sanitizer dispensers will be available at each church door. Rather than passing a collection basket for your offertory donations, there will be several “collection stations” at the doors of the church.

The pew cushions have been removed and are in storage, awaiting healthier days. The hymnals have also been removed. Health officials have advised that congregational singing and choirs are not permitted. All participation aids can be found in the weekly bulletin; you are asked to take that bulletin home with you—please do not leave it in the pew.

When leaving the church, please exit “pew by pew” and continue to honor the six foot “social distancing” guidelines.

As mentioned, this will be a “gradual return” to full participation and to a complete Mass schedule. Here's the proposed schedule for public Masses in church for the immediate future. If the numbers in attendance require it, we will quickly add additional Masses.

Monday, May 25, Memorial Day, 8:30am only (regular holiday time)

Tuesday to Friday, May 26 to 29, 7:00pm daily

Saturdays, beginning Saturday, May 30, 4:00pm only

Sundays, beginning May 31, 10:00am only

Please let me know your thoughts. Do you plan to attend Mass? Does the proposed schedule make sense? What additional information would be helpful to you? Your input will help us as we make final arrangements. In recent days we have frequently heard “We are all in this together.” For us, as people of faith, we know that we are not alone. Especially during this Easter season, we are mindful that the pain of Good Friday is always overcome by the glory of the Resurrection.

The Offertory collection for Sunday May 10, was \$18,784.24. Your continued generosity is a blessing for our parish.

I speak for all of us here on the pastoral staff in thanking you for the many supportive cards, letters, notes, e-mails, texts, phone calls, chalk messages on the sidewalks, signs, etc. We gratefully acknowledge each and every act of appreciation. We have tried to do the best we could to let you know that St Charles Borromeo Parish is here for you and that we are concerned for your ongoing welfare.