

ALL SAINTS PARISH
66 WILLOW STREET
PLYMOUTH, PA 18651
Telephone: (570)779-5323

June 1, 2020

Dear Friends,

You may not remember what happened in the spring of 2016 or 2018, but you will probably never forget what has happened during the spring of 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic and the social distancing guidelines that have accompanied it have changed almost everything about our daily lives, and the changes are still not over. That can be discouraging. Like many of you, I am ready for things to return back to something approaching normal, even though I recognize that each step takes wisdom, caution and patience. In the midst of it all, God reminds us that He leads us through the wilderness into the new things He has for us.

In the reopening of the sacramental life of our church we will be abiding with the recommendations issued by CDC and a copy of the liturgical norms issued by our bishop Joseph C. Bambera. Also, I asked the members of our Pastoral council and Worship committee for their thoughts on the subject at hand.

Here are some guidelines /explanations of the changes you can expect:

The obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains suspended. In other words, no one is required to attend church during this time of pandemic. Also, people who are over 65 and older are vulnerable and should consider staying home. Even more urgently, if you believe that you might be **sick with COVID-19**, please seek medical assistance and remain at home as an act of charity for others.

We will resume the Eucharistic celebrations in our church with the Mass on **Saturday June 6, 2020 at 4PM.** After that day we will hold one Mass per day. On Sunday our Mass will be at 10AM. Daily Masses will begin at 12:05 PM as per the usual schedule. Also, all Masses will be held in the main church. In case of funeral Mass, the daily Mass will be replaced by the funeral Mass.

We will have only one Mass per day to give time for cleaning and sanitizing our main church. Also, the Mass will be shorter with no live music and a shorter sermon to start with. Eventually, we will work our way to the normal celebrations with all the aspects present.

The following are the required procedures for the public celebration of Mass:

All people coming into church must wear **facial coverings/ masks** to cover their mouths and noses. It is also strongly encouraged that everyone coming to church should bring his/her own sanitizer. There will be a bottle of **sanitizer** at the ramp area – we will only be using the ramp area main door to enter the church.

We will begin with up to 40 people present at the celebration of the Mass working our way to the 25 percent of a church's seating capacity of 300 that is 75 people in order to be able to maintain

proper six foot **social distancing** between groups and individuals that **are not of the same household**. People belonging to the same household can sit in the same pew. We will strictly enforce this to the best of our ability and we ask you to please be understanding. **Our main priority here is the safety of those attending our Masses.**

Also, in order to enforce **social distancing** we will leave 2 empty/vacant pews (they will be blocked off and clearly marked) between the pews that will be in use.

Moreover, there will be **signs on the floor** to help us with distancing during the communion time. And the **communion** will be distributed **by the priest** alone **at the end of the Mass**. In addition, it is strongly recommended that you receive **communion on your palm**. Also, after receiving of communion the Mass participants are asked to leave the church via the right (parking lot side aisle).

Please note that **our ushers will be managing the flow of the traffic** in the church during the Mass.

Also, for those of you who brought your weekly contributions – the collection box will be placed at our baptismal font at the entrance of the church.

Due to the limited number of people who are allowed to participate at Mass we invite you to call and **make your reservation** if you wish to attend the Mass. To make reservations please call the parish office @ 570-779-5323 between 9AM-3PM (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday). You can call the day before the daily Mass and any time in the week before the weekend Masses to make your reservations. The reservations will be taken on a first come first serve basis. There is one exception to this rule. If you have scheduled an intention for the Mass we will call you and give you first chance to attend the Mass.

I know that all these changes are a lot to consider and they will require a lot of sacrifice from all of us. However, they are meant to preserve the safety of all of us who will come together to pray and to worship God and to receive Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

Before I close, I want to thank you for all your prayers and financial support of our parish and I assure you of my daily prayers for you and your loved ones.

If you have any questions about these matters please call our parish office.

In Christ's peace,

Father Jacek