

# PRAYING IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC

Part Two: Returning to Church

## PLEASE READ BEFORE COMING TO MASS

### “JUST THE FACTS, MA’AM”

1. Public Mass will resume on MONDAY, MAY 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 AM at St. John’s.
2. Although we are taking every reasonable precaution we can, we cannot guarantee that a person will not catch COVID 19 when attending St. John’s.

*Therefore, the obligation to participate physically in Sunday Mass is lifted for everyone who lives and is visiting in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati at least through the summer. Also, one is **not** obliged to watch Mass on TV or participate in weekday Mass, although these are encouraged if you finds them helpful for your spiritual life.*

3. Because of social distancing protocols, the capacity of church is reduced to about 200 people.

*Recognizing this issue, we encourage people to come to one of the weekday Masses instead of everyone on Saturday afternoon or Sunday. We will have some evening Masses during the week to meet this need.*

### **BASIC PRINCIPLES AND VALUES THAT UNDERLIE OUR PRACTICE & PROCEDURES**

1. Core to our life as Catholic Christians is gathering in prayer, especially on Sunday for Mass, in obedience to command of Jesus to “Do this in memory of me.” It is only for serious reasons that a Catholic misses Sunday Mass, and for the extremely serious reasons that Sunday Mass not be available to the people.
2. Core to our life as Catholic Christians is a profound respect and defense of human life, which shares uniquely in divine life. Integral to human life is the health and wellbeing of persons.
3. True freedom for the Christian is not simply having the right to make any choice they wish (within the confines of the law) such as we find in civil law. Christian freedom is the ability to choose what is the ultimate good for oneself *and* others. To live in Christ, therefore is not simply to view life from an egocentric perspective, but from the perspective of the good of others.

4. The Church does not promote the imposition of unnecessary burdens on people; however, in the complexity of a crisis, the options of debate and exceptions to the rule may need to be set aside for the good of all. This does not mean that what has been determined is the best solution but will allow movement at this particular time and situation.
5. The Church has always taught that that obedience to proper authority is a virtue and not an option to disregard because we may not like it. One has a right to register complaint, but unless the action called for violates a moral good it is to be followed. (Obedience as a virtue is not well accepted in American culture since we tend to put individual liberty above all other goods.)

## PUTTING THE PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE



Anyone whose health may be jeopardized or may jeopardize others health are NOT to attend Mass. Anyone with *symptoms* of COVID 19, a cold, or flu are NOT to attend church. If you think someone you have been in contact with may have COVID 19, please do not come to church. If you are diagnosed with COVID 19 within two weeks of being at Mass, please contact Fr. Kemper (513-367-9086 x 215).

## SOCIAL DISTANCING

The Only Thing I Want in My Face Is Grace



6 ft.



6 ft



Think INSECT – 6 feet

Distancing from those who you do not live with is 6 feet all around, from the time you leave your car until you return to your car.

- ❖ Because of the need to control the number of people in church, entrance into church will only be through the left and right FRONT doors of church. Once we reach that number, the doors of church will be locked, as directed by the Archbishop. You may or may not agree with this, but that is required for public gatherings to occur.

- ❖ In order to maintain the distance, we need to leave a space of two pews before and after where people will sit and a clear marking of six feet side by side. To achieve this, pews will be marked for space between one individual, a couple, and families of various sizes. It may be that a family may not be able to sit together, although our hope is that families can be gathered together.
  - In light of these arrangements, you might not be able to sit where you wish.
  - There will be ushers to direct people to an appropriate section.
- ❖ Every effort should be taken to keep from moving in front/behind others once you are in the pew. If you are a person who normally has to use the restroom during Mass, please go before and sit on the end of the pew.
- ❖ The Communion procession will follow the normal pattern and aisles, except for:
  - there will be only one line in each aisle (not two by two) and will begin with those on the left side of the Communion procession aisle. Once that side is completed, the right side of the aisle comes forward.
  - six feet is to be maintained coming forward and returning to the pew.
  - if you are not going to receive Communion, you should come forward and simply turn to return to your pew; this will keep from persons passing in front or behind another.
- ❖ Upon leaving church:
  - It is expected that everyone stay until all are dismissed in order that people are not climbing over others in the pew to leave (and because one does not leave the King's banquet early; this is God's dinner, not carry out pizza.)
  - People will leave church from the last pews first at the direction of the ushers. This will keep people (in the aisles and in the pews) facing one another. It is important to maintain the six-foot distance.
  - Please do not remain in the gathering area and plaza to talk, since it is necessary to keep people moving to their cars. (This goes against everything we have tried to build for a sense of community, but it is necessary in this case.)

## **GOTCHA COVERED (OR UNCOVERED)**

Who Is That Masked Man?

You are encouraged but not required to wear a mask. The priest and deacon, when they are in the sanctuary, and a good distance from the people, do not wear masks. Eucharistic Ministers and the priest and deacon will wear them for the distribution

of Holy Communion. Ushers will wear them when they are directing people before, during, and after Mass.

NOTE: Unlike human beings, all masks are not created equal, however almost any mask reduces the strength of the flow of air from your mouth and nose into the atmosphere.

Acceptable  
Mask



Acceptable  
Mask:



Not acceptable  
Mask:



### **And a Bunch of Other Stuff**

1. All hymnals, missalettes, and pew envelopes are removed from church until further notice. Upon arriving, please take a (NEW, UNUSED) hymn sheet. Leave the hymn sheet in the pew where you sat so that we know that this spot needs to be sanitized. The used hymn sheets will be discarded.
2. The collection baskets will be at the doors of church.
3. Our HVAC system will be set to exchange indoor/outdoor air at a greater rate. This may affect the efficiency at which the church is cooled.
4. Because of its small size the cry room will be closed, but the Community Room will be open. (It is against the law to put misbehaving children in someone else's car.)
5. These procedures may be changed according to developments in the COVID situation.
6. There is to be no physical contact during the Lord's Prayer. The sign of peace, reception of Holy Communion on the tongue and from the cup are suspended until further notice. Ministers of Holy Communion will use hand sanitizer upon coming to the altar.
7. In all of this, remember patience, understanding and forgiveness is central to life in Christ. "I'm sorry." "May I?" and "Thank you" go a long way.

Thanks for your cooperation on these matters.

It is important that they be followed by EVERYONE.