

Resume to Public Masses

Returning of Limited Public Masses

Church of St. Bernard, St. Paul

From: Father Ivan Sant, Pastor

THESE DIRECTIVES AND INVITATIONS ARE ADDRESSED TO OUR PARISHIONERS.

In order to avoid confusion, please don't pass this information or invitation to people that are not parishioners. It is very important at this time that the faithful follow the directives of their own respective pastors: every parish has different needs and challenges. Rules cannot be applied the same to all parishes. The following directives I am giving you here are meant ONLY for our parishioners.

SUNDAY DISPENSATION and THOSE AT-RISK: Archbishop Hebda has dispensed us from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass until further notice. This means that you are not obliged to come to Mass during this time until the dispensation is lifted.

If you can, we still encourage all our at-risk people, those with underlying health conditions and the elderly to remain home a little longer or until it is safer for you to come out. Since the COVID-19 virus is a threat to our physical health and also a spiritual health, we need the grace of the Sacraments. Therefore, I am arranging that the Saturday 4pm and Sunday 8am Mass is ONLY for those who are more vulnerable can attend that Mass. We will do extra cleaning and sanitizing of the Church before these Masses, will keep social distancing, etc. If you are relatively healthy and have kept less of a strict self-quarantining or socially distancing, please do not attend these Masses. The Sunday Masses at 10:30am (English) and 2:00pm (Spanish) are available to you.

NO PHYSICAL TOUCH: No greetings or holding of hands at all times while in Church during our services. We are all expected to keep social distancing of at least 6 feet while in the Church. Our pews are roped off to ensure this. Please proceed only to the designated open pews. If you are of the same household, you sit may next to another. Otherwise, keep a distance of 6 feet please.

HAND SANITIZER AND MASKS: Please bring your own hand sanitizer and personal mask if you can. We will still provide hand sanitizers at the open church entrances and exits. We will also have some disposable face masks for those who cannot bring their own.

We will be cleaning and sanitizing the Church before and after every Mass, giving special attention to the restrooms and door handles.

ENTRANCE AND EXIT DOORS: In decrease surface exposure and to make sure everyone sanitizes and has face masks upon entry, the only entrance into the church will be on Geranium Avenue. Please exit the church from the opposite side of the church, facing the school. The front door of the church will be opened before Mass for more space for exiting. We want to avoid touching door handles and other church objects as much as we can.

Signs have been put up to indicate the entrance and the exits, so people may walk in one direction and do not bump on each other. Certain doors will be opened at certain times or

all the time to ensure air circulation and a socially distanced traffic flow.

PEW SEATING: When you come to the church you may sit either: two people per pew, or one family per pew. People will be seated in EVERY THIRD PEW. Please follow the signs and sit only in the pews that are open and available. The pews that are blocked will have a written sign that says "NO SEATING HERE."

MISSALLETTE AND MUSIC ISSUE: We are not leaving books in the Church pews. We are asking parishioners to take home a missalette and hymnal. That will be your PERSONAL worship aid which you can bring to Church and to bring back when you return home. This still make book usage consistent and will avoid the cross-contamination of different people using different books.

HOLY COMMUNION: During this time, I will be administering Holy Communion in the hands ONLY. Please refrain from receiving on the tongue during this time. There won't be consecrated wine for the people during this time. I WILL BE COMING TO YOUR SEAT to bring you the consecrated host so there will be no need to line up and return to your pews, reducing movement and surface contact. To facilitate this, the Archdiocese has allowed us to give Communion after the Final Bless. A designated seminarian or Eucharistic minister may help as well, when necessary.

THE SACRED VESSELS: The vessels for Mass will be washed and sanitize before and after every Mass as well. Before Mass, there will be designated sacred vessels with unconsecrated hosts RESERVED ONLY FOR THE PEOPLE and another vessel reserved for the priest alone. I won't be mixing or touching those reserved vessels and will make sure that I sanitize my hands before administering Holy communion to the people within their designated vessel.

BULLETIN: You can find a copy of the bulletin in the church entrance. There won't be anyone handing the bulletins at the door during this time.

TITHE COLLECTION: We won't be passing the collection during Mass, but can you drop your envelope or cash donations in one of the two baskets BEFORE or AFTER Mass. The two baskets will be placed in the middle aisle so that they are visible to most people. You can also mail your donation or drop it in the rectory anytime or use the online donation on our website. We highly encourage you to move to monthly on-line giving if you are able in the parish website.

There are many other details that is not included in here yet these are the most immediate and practical things you need to know before coming to St. Bernard. If you have any questions, problems or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me in the office.

Also, if you know of any parishioner whom we may not have been able to reach please let me know.

Dear Parishioners,

Since we first began taking steps to contain the coronavirus on May 20th, I am happy to offer the following updates on the health of our clergy and seminarians.

First, I tested negative for the coronavirus on Saturday, May 23rd. I moved into the office building the following day to protect the parish family and myself, as well as to preclude future infection. Yesterday, I went to my physician, who confirmed my health and approved of the steps I have taken to stay healthy.

Second, Fr Joseph is feeling much better and his condition improves every day. Ray the seminarian has been monitoring Fr Joseph as he has quarantined in his room and been taking care of him throughout this time. Thank you for all the support you have provided, from prayers to food to medicine. This has made it easier for Ray and lifted Fr Joseph's spirits.

Despite the unfortunate presence of the coronavirus in our rectory, we as a parish are moving toward little by little to the full implementation of the latest archdiocesan guidelines for reopening. Archbishop Hebda has encouraged us to reopen the church for public Mass, so long as we take the proper precautions. These include limiting physical touch to decrease touch points, marking off pews for appropriate social distance, and propping open the entrance and exit doors before and after Mass to create more space for entering and exiting the church building. We have taped or closed the pews in the church limiting just the 25% of the church capacity, providing hand sanitizers by doors of the church and we are asking everyone to wear masks in the church. We will have some extra masks if anyone needs. All the detailed protocol is in the last page of this bulletin.

Please remember that Archbishop Hebda has dispensed all parishioners from the weekly Sunday Mass obligation so that no one has to risk their lives to receive the sacraments. Nonetheless, the Church recognizes that everyone needs the grace of the sacraments in this time, and will provide them to everyone who seeks them, provided this does not pose an extreme risk to anyone's health.

St. Bernard's is here to serve you and minister to your spiritual needs. The coronavirus has made crystal clear the essential nature of this role. If you need more specialized accommodations, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Dear Parishioners,

Since we first began taking steps to contain the coronavirus on May 22nd, I am happy to offer the following updates on the health of our clergy and seminarians.

First, I tested negative for the coronavirus on Saturday, May 23rd. I moved into the office building the following day to protect the parish family and myself, as well as to preclude future infection. This minimizes the risk of my infection, and thus protects me from infecting any parishioner. Yesterday, I went to my physician, who confirmed my health and approved of the steps I have taken to stay healthy.

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Come Holy Spirit in this Pentecost to renew the face of the earth.

God Bless.