

Dear Parish Member,

We will be resuming communal celebration of Sunday Masses on July 4th-5th.

First, I want to encourage anyone over the age of 65 and those with underlying health conditions to please continue to stay at home and participate in the Sunday Liturgy of the Word as provided on our parish YouTube channel. If you have any symptoms of illness, please stay at home.

Having conferred with a local M.D. "Symptoms would include fevers (objective via thermometer or subjective feeling of warmth), chills, cough, runny nose, sinus congestion, loss of sense of smell, shortness of breath, wheezing, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, body aches, malaise and fatigue. Anyone who has had a positive nasal swab test for the virus causing Covid-19 (along with everyone else in their same household) should avoid Mass and other public places for 30 days – even if they are completely asymptomatic. And anyone who has a positive antibody test (from blood work) may have immunity to Covid-19 (this is still uncertain) but should still comply with all social distancing policies while at church."

The obligation to participate in Sunday Mass continues to be dispensed by the Archbishop until August 2nd. The dispensation will be extended month by month as needed.

Because of the restrictions placed upon us, the celebration of the Mass will be much different from the way we are accustomed to worship. We consider these changes provisional. For example - there will be no entrance procession, no collection taken pew by pew, no presentation of the gifts, no Communion procession as such and no recessional procession. Altar servers, Greeters, Ushers and Eucharistic Ministers will not be functioning in their roles at this time. Singing will be reduced.

The parish staff and I have been working hard to prepare for resuming Sunday Masses and to ensure the safety of those who are able to be present. Observing the 6 feet distancing requirement when factoring seating capacity for each Mass determined there are 42 seating areas (whether for an individual or household group) available in our church (6 feet distancing requires a 2 pew space between each seating area).

One of the requirements is the sanitization of pews, etc., before and between Masses. Because of the time needed to do this, **we need to change the 9:00 AM Mass time on Sunday to 8:00 AM.** Depending upon the response, we may need to add 1 or more Masses. For now, starting the weekend of July 4th-5th, the Mass schedule will be:

Saturday - 5:00 PM. Sunday - 8:00 AM & 11:00 AM.

You must pre-register to attend Mass. To do so, please use Sign-Up Genius at <https://www.signupgenius.com/tabs/1357FDC04A7CCE4CE8-massups>

Each week registration will open on Wednesday morning at 10:00 AM and close on Friday at noon (or earlier if reservation quota is reached). Registration is for the following weekend. It is necessary to pre-register so that we will have a complete listing of names for each Mass. Pre-registration will allow us to control the number of people who enter the church and will assure you of a seating place.

The first registration will open on Wednesday, July 1st, at 10:00 AM for the weekend of July 4th-5th. When you arrive for Mass, a Safety Volunteer will check off your name and tell you your assigned section and pew number. (Please refer to the seating chart attachment.)

Important Mass Participation Guidelines are also attached, which we please ask you to carefully observe and perhaps bring with you to Mass. Everyone (ages 5 and up) is required to wear a face mask during Mass. *“Note the differences between the various kinds of masks. A cloth mask protects everyone else in the confined space to a great degree from potentially infectious droplets. Cloth masks do not generally protect the wearer of the mask, but if everyone wears a cloth mask, then we are all protecting each other. When a parishioner wears a surgical mask or N95 mask, that offers some personal protection from the respiratory droplets of others and this is an option especially for older or vulnerable parishioners. To be effective, a mask must cover both the nose and mouth.”*

We have produced a YouTube episode titled, “Resuming Mass at St. Jude’s” to help you visualize some of these guidelines. You will find the link to our parish YouTube channel on our website homepage. It will air the week of June 28th. I ask for your patience as we initiate these new procedures.

During this time, we will have a new “Liturgical Ministry” called Safety Volunteers whose role is to guide and assist you when coming to Mass. This role is different from what an usher would normally do. I will be reaching out to various groups for volunteers. There will be a training session.

Brothers and Sisters, once again I wish to emphasize, please don’t feel any pressure to return for Sunday Eucharist until the time is right and safe for you. Our Lord loves you just as much if you decide it best to stay home. My primary concern is for your health, safety, and protection.

Let us continually pray for each other, our world, our country, and for all whom we hold dear. Let us pray for healing and for peace. And may the tens of thousands who have died from the pandemic and all who have died from hands of violence, rest in eternal peace.

Father Charlie Conley