

ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS PARISH

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June 3, 2020

Dear Parishioner,

Peace and Blessings to all of you!

The past few months have been difficult. For some in our parish family, the pandemic has caused serious hardship, suffering and loss. All have experienced a heightened sense of fear and anxiety. Trusting in the goodness and love of our God, we move forward in faith & confidence.

As of Thursday, June 11 our parish church will reopen for the celebration of Holy Mass. Before I share with you our parish "REOPENING PLAN", I want to draw your attention to some of the general guidelines provided by C.D.C., The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and The Diocese of Scranton.

The dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass is still in place. What this means is that those who are vulnerable, who are at risk, those with compromised immune systems and underlying health issues, are strongly urged to remain at home. If you choose to attend Mass, be aware of the RISKS and then make your decision accordingly.

If you are experiencing any symptoms of the Covid-19 virus, please remain at home.

Please note the following protocol:

- Mass attendance is limited to 100 people (25% seating capacity).
- A face mask must be worn the entire time you are in the church, except for the reception of Holy Communion.
- Social distancing of 6 ft. must be maintained at all times.
- Entrance to the church will be through the Main doors on Prospect Ave. The church will open 30 minutes before Mass.
- Upon arrival, you will be greeted by a Minister of Hospitality who will direct you to an assigned seat. Attendees living in the same household will be permitted to sit together. Pews will be marked off in order to maintain social distancing guidelines. Seating will begin at the front of the church so we may easily keep track of the number of people in attendance and allow for maximum seating capacity.
- Envelopes and offerings may be put in the collection box at the church entrance.

- Holy Communion will be distributed at the end of Mass. Although it is strongly discouraged, anyone who still wishes to receive Holy Communion on the tongue is instructed to wait until the end of the Communion distribution after everyone else has received. This will minimize the risk of spreading the virus to others, as well as allow time for the priest to sanitize his hands properly after each person who receives on the tongue. You are asked to follow the directions provided by the Ministers of Hospitality. Following the reception of Holy Communion, you are asked to immediately exit the church by the side doors (Brook St or Donnelly Court).
- In accordance with CDC and Diocesan guidelines, the church will be cleaned and sanitized after ALL Masses.
- Due to limited seating, a reservation must be made to attend a weekend Mass. No reservation is required to attend a weekday Mass. To make a reservation please call the Parish Office at (570) 343-6420. Reservations will only be accepted on Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays from 9:00 am until 1:00 pm. When making the reservation, you will be asked to specify the following: 1) Name 2) phone number 3) Mass time 4) number from your household attending. Please note: reservations left on parish voice mail will not be accepted. No reservations will be accepted beyond Thursday.
- Please check the parish website and Facebook page for changes and updates.

In closing, let me say that I have been inspired by your faith, resilience and generosity during this time. I thank you for your patience and understanding. Know that I carry you in my heart. May God Bless you and Mary keep you in his loving care! I look forward to seeing you.

In Jesus and Mary,

Rev. Scott Sterowski, Pastor