

Sacred Heart Catholic Church



May 17, 2020

Dear parishioners of Sacred Heart,

This letter is to inform you that Bishop Rhoades has lifted the suspension on public liturgies here in our diocese beginning on the weekend of May 23-24 for the Masses of the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord.

It is very important that you read all of this letter to understand some very important safeguards we are putting in place at Sacred Heart to continue social distancing and keep everyone safe.

First, I want to say that I am so happy with how our parish has pivoted during this quarantine. I am proud of how many of you have really strengthened your domestic church - building prayer corners, taking extra time for prayer together, gathering with small groups over zoom, continuing bible studies and finding new ways to enjoy quality family time. I will always remember the love you have shown through emails, letters, social media posts and the surprise parade! May we keep this joy and watch it increase as we slowly begin transitioning back to worship together in the church.

I am excited to have some of you in the church again for Mass. But this is a very delicate transition and we need to proceed carefully. We will do our best at Sacred Heart to create a safe and clean environment based on [Indiana's Guidance for Places of Worship](#). But it is impossible to remove all risks of cross-contamination of the coronavirus. I would ask for your help in preventing any possible spread of the virus by considering the CDC's recommendations to remain at home if you are sick or have exhibited any cold like symptoms.

The Guidance for Places of Worship suggests that "all individuals who are 65 and above or who have an underlying at-risk health condition to stay home and watch services online." I have had many who are in this category ask what I think about

their attending Mass regardless; I miss all of you and look forward to your return in time, but for now these guidelines are meant to protect you. Do not worry, we will continue to live-stream Mass throughout the time of this pandemic.

Please review and consult this document for instructions on how our parish will proceed in making the transition of opening Mass back up to the public.

This transition requires patience and flexibility. As we try to communicate any changes clearly and quickly, it is inevitable that things will be misunderstood, miscommunicated or may not be what we expected, or what we hoped for - if at any point you feel something has not been clearly communicated, then, I would encourage you to return to this source and double check the information. We will try to be as clear as possible but if after all of this you still have a question then please submit a question [here](#). Find reponses to FAQ on the parish website.

In Christ,

Fr. Jonathan

Attending Mass during the current phase of Indiana's "Back on Track"

Sacred Heart will employ the following measures:

- We will offer 5 Masses each weekend to help spread out attendance; the schedule will be:
 - Saturday: 4:30pm and 7:00pm
 - Sunday: *8:30am, 11:00am, and 7:00pm
- Weekday Masses
 - Tuesday/Thursday: *5:30pm
 - Wednesday/Friday: *8:00am
- Masses that will be live-streamed on YouTube are marked with an asterisk (*)
- If there are any changes to the mass schedule, these changes will be communicated at the masses and also on our Website.

Before arriving for Mass - please sign up - Seating for Mass is very limited, in an effort to help spread out attendance we are asking everyone to sign up for a Mass using [this Google Form](#). If you see that a Mass is no longer available then it means we have reached the potential limit and ask that you please attend at a different time. The link will be posted on the parish website and be active after the 8:30 each Sunday.

Arriving for Mass:

- **Everyone must wear a facemask when entering the Church and during their time in the building;** except for children under the age of 2.
 - Please bring your own mask, but a limited supply will be available for those who do not have one.
 - Masks are not required to be worn by those serving while in the sanctuary (namely, Lectors, seminarian and Father) but should be put on when returning to the nave.
- **Hand Sanitizer stations will be set up outside of the entrance for everyone to use before entering;** but you are encouraged to bring your own as well.
- **Seating during Mass:**
 - When entering the building, ushers will direct everyone to open pews and seats.
 - One family unit per pew, unless there can be at least 6' of distance between two families.
 - Pews that are marked off for social distancing must remain empty.

Communion

The Church permits receiving Communion in the hand or on the tongue. There is a risk either way, but the measures which will be taken at Sacred Heart are as follows:

- Seminarian Augustine and I will distribute communion to each section at a time. Please follow instructions to be given during Mass.
- While distributing Holy Communion, if there is believed to be any contact with a person's hand or tongue, then distribution would pause briefly to - purify my fingers, wash my hands with soap and water, and use sanitizer before continuing distribution.
- I will wash my hands before Mass begins and again before distribution of Holy Communion.
- The ciborium will be prepared beforehand, and the sacristan will wear a mask and gloves while filling the ciborium. The ciborium will then be covered and placed on the altar before Mass; and will not be touched until it is time for Holy Communion. Just before distributing Holy Communion, the EMHC and I will wash our hands with soap and santize before distribution.
- Family units and individuals will be asked to follow the 6' markings on the ground
- Leave your mask on until you reach near the front for Holy Communion. Once it is close to your turn, pull your mask down to receive Holy Communion. You will not receive the Eucharist until your mask is down.

Singing

- **All singing is suspended until it is determined that it is reasonably safe.**
 - There is evidence that singing, especially in close proximity to others, greatly increases the risk of viral spread by aerosolizing respiratory particles in a manner more akin to coughing or sneezing than mere talking. This causes particles to travel beyond six feet, and even surgical masks don't effectively contain them. Infectious disease experts with whom we have consulted believe that this poses an unacceptable risk that would negate the beneficial effects of distancing and masks.
 - Live instrumental music (e.g., organ, piano, string instruments, etc.) is still permitted.

Dismissal after Mass

- People attending Mass will be dismissed row by row, and you will be asked to exit the building immediately so that the church and entrances can be purified. I apologize that we will not be able to allow anyone to remain after Mass for prayer of Thanksgiving; communion will take longer, hopefully giving all enough time to be able to make a good Thanksgiving.

Announcements

Chapel

- The chapel will be closed during and in-between Masses on Saturday and Sunday.

Confessions

There is already a barrier in place within our confessional, but I will be wearing a mask and ask that you would also. Social distancing guidelines will be posted for those in line. The schedule for this week will be:

- Tuesday (5/19) - Friday (5/22) @ 6:00pm - 7:00pm
- Saturday (5/23) @ 9:00am

Eucharistic Adoration

We have resumed our previous schedule on Wednesdays, 1:00pm-9:00pm, but we are moving into the church. I will continue to livestream the 8:00 hour; for those in attendance I warn you that the camera setup will be distracting.

I encourage sanitizing your hands and sanitizing the pew with available wipes after your time of prayer.