



Embracing God's People • Equipping Disciples • Accompanying Believers

August 12, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As promised in a prior letter, I wanted to take this opportunity to share with you our initial plans for the celebration of outdoor liturgies.

Although the National Weather Service has issued an [Excessive Heat Watch](#) effective Friday, August 14 through Monday August 17, we are going ahead with a **Mass on Sunday Morning at 8:00am**.

As I write, high temperatures are expected to run between 95 and 108 degrees. Everyone is encouraged to "monitor the latest forecasts and warnings for updates on this situation. Be prepared to drink plenty of fluids, stay in an air-conditioned room, stay out of the sun, and check up on relatives and neighbors. Take extra precautions if you work or spend time outside."

If you choose to venture out and join us here at Lourdes on Sunday morning for mass, please be aware that given our geography there will be little or no shade available on the lot. Sunscreen, sunhats, shades, water, etc. should be given serious consideration.

I have noted before that here at Lourdes our biggest obstacle was going to be our weather (Heat and Wind). I'm comfortable that the protocols which were developed in preparation for the safe re-opening of our Church building for public worship are pretty thorough, and can be easily adapted. To that end, the following arrangements are in place for the coming weekend.

Eucharist Outdoors

The space set aside for our Eucharist is the area of the parking lot circumscribed by the Moran Center and the School. It's the south side of our lot. If you've attended HUTS in the past, that's roughly where we'll be located. The space will be coned-off from the parking area.

A makeshift altar will be set up on the step outside the Moran Center, facing West. (When you come into the lot, you want to arrange your deck-chairs, blankets, etc. to face the Moran Center)

The liturgy will be very basic: the homily will be brief, and there will be no music/singing.

Entry to the space will be through the gate located next to the outdoor Grotto adjacent to the Moran Center. Closest parking will be in the "smaller lot" between the Church building and the Moran Center.

Please keep the following **Protocols** in mind:

First of all, the **dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday mass** continues. Archbishop Gomez has as a priority the health and well-being of our parishioners, and is particularly sensitive to those who are considered part of the population that is at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. We're all pretty familiar with that at this stage... over 65, people living in nursing homes or long-term care facilities, those with underlying health conditions, etc.

Everyone is encouraged to take **personal responsibility** for their own health and the choices made in this regard. I encourage everyone in the higher-risk group to read the related [CDC recommendation](#) before coming to worship with us in person. If there is any doubt in your mind, please don't hesitate to join us in worship via the ZOOM link posted on our parish website for mass at 9:00am & 11:00am. We are committed to streaming our masses from Church into the foreseeable future.

As when we opened church for mass in June, our ability to reach out to everyone who participates in our outdoor liturgies is very important. In the event that there is an outbreak of COVID-19, we both want and need to notify people. To that end, we will continue to ask people to provide contact information ahead of time. It will save time on the morning of...

I do want to take a moment to clarify for those who are confused about this. The information provided to us is not shared with anyone outside of the parish staff. Some people shared with me that they thought we were "reporting" to some civic authority. This is not the case. Last March I had to send an email to all parishioners to advise that someone had been present in the Church who subsequently tested positive for COVID-19. I had no way to just reach out to the people who were present at the same time, and so I had to send an email blast to everyone. As part of our duty of care, I just need a means of reaching everyone promptly and efficiently in the event of an outbreak or to advise of the possibility of exposure from being present at OLL.

To pre-register just click on this [link](#), and provide the required information. We use "Faith Direct" to assist us with this process. Those who are already using the eGiving service provided by Faith Direct will be familiar with the layout and may find it a little easier to navigate.

Pre-registration will be important and will save a lot of time on-site as we begin this process of entering into public worship once again. When you arrive at the check-in space (look for the blue pop-up) by the Moran Center, you will be asked to assist staff and volunteers who will

- Verify you're wearing a mask/face-covering
- Verify the contact information you've already provided,
- Verify with you that you've been symptom-free for COVID-19 for at least two weeks
- Assist you with hand-sanitizer
- Invite you to observe social distancing of at least six feet (6') from others.

Update on Weekday Mass Outdoors

On Monday last we successfully recommenced public liturgies on the patio area immediately outside the main doors of the Church building. While the patio area is not very large, it allows for a comfortable gathering of about 30-35 people or so. The timing of the mass is early, at 6:30am, and it is offered Monday through Friday. As this suggests, it is an opportunity for people who are commuting to work to avail of the Holy Eucharist.

Care for Self and Neighbors in the Heat

During the heat advisory, please take care to remain well hydrated, and if you have elderly or vulnerable neighbors, I encourage you to perhaps check in on them to make sure they're doing ok. Sometimes during such a heat advisory people head to the mall or to some other indoor space where the air conditioning allows people to remain somewhat cool. That may be a less available option because of the COVID-19 related restrictions on public gatherings indoors.

The usual advice for heat advisories is worth noting:

- Drink plenty of fluids
- Inasmuch as possible, stay in an air-conditioned environment
- Stay out of the sun

If you have to go out for an errand, please remember not to leave children or pets unattended in your vehicle under any circumstances.

Be attentive to heat-related conditions such as dehydration, heat-stroke, heat-exhaustion, etc. If there's an emergency, call 9-1-1.

With that, friends, I close my mid-week update. Please be well in the coming days, and continue to look out for one another. If circumstances permit, I look forward to greeting you in person on Sunday morning, or on some other Sunday in the near future.

Please continue to pray for an end to COVID-19, and its related disruptions to our lives.

God's continued blessings on you all.

Fr. David