

PARISH PROCEDURES FOR OPENING THE CHURCH

The Bishop and the Governor have issued guidelines for the opening of churches in Delaware. The focus of these guidelines is the health and welfare of the people of our diocese and state. The COVID19 virus is extremely communicable and the safety measures call for all of us to be concerned for our own health and for the health of our neighbor. Jesus tells us to love one another as He has loved us. We are being called to put this into practice. Parish life will not get back to normal for awhile and as we now **begin** the process of opening the church for worship we need the good will and cooperation of all our parishioners.

Bishop Malooly has issued guidelines which we must follow **for the safety and health** of all who participate in Mass. **FIRST AND FOREMOST, HE HAS DISPENSED ALL CATHOLICS FROM THE OBLIGATION TO ATTEND SUNDAY MASS** at the present time. To that end we will continue to provide Mass on our websites.

Those who are symptomatic or have been exposed to the virus within 14 days are not permitted to enter the church. All attendees are asked to take their temperature at home before coming to church. If you have a persistent cough or do not feel well, stay home.

Parishioners who are particularly vulnerable (over 60, existing heart or lung conditions, diabetes, or immuno-compromised) are **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED** to avoid the risk of attending Mass. You are responsible for your own health and the health of others. Stay home.

With social distancing of 6 feet, there is room in the church for 140 people. When the church is filled the doors will be locked. We ask your cooperation if you are turned away. *Remember, your health and the health of your neighbor is our first priority.*

Before you leave for church, take your temperature, use the bathroom, wash your hands for 20 seconds and bring your face mask.

All parishioners are to enter the church at the front doors. Everyone, including those on the altar are to wear face coverings. Since no one knows who has the virus, this will protect you and your neighbor. Children under 2 do not need to wear a face mask. Everyone is to sanitize their hands upon entering the church. Because of the shortage, we ask you bring you own, if possible. There will be the hand sanitizer at the entrance.

The ushers will lead you to the available pew. You will have to sacrifice your favorite pew so please follow the instructions. All children are to remain in the pew with their parents. If you have to leave the pew, you may not return.

The aisles of the church will be marked at 6' intervals and the pews will be marked also at 6' intervals. Members of the same household may sit together, which will throw off the markings at that pew. **Make sure to leave 6' feet between you and the next person, if not a family member.** Gathering before or after Mass is prohibited.

The holy water fonts have been removed as have the missalettes. There will be a basket at front entrance for your donations as you leave.

The bathrooms will be closed.

The distribution of Holy Communion will be after the final blessing of the Mass. The distribution of the Precious Blood is suspended until further notice. There will be two Ministers of Communion at the front of the church. **We will be forming the Communion procession in the side aisles.** The ushers will dismiss each row as the procession moves forward. There will be markers in the aisle at 6' intervals. The line will be single file. Stay as far from the Communion Minister as you can. He/she will place the Host in your hand. Walk toward the center aisle to the marked space (6'), pull down your mask and consume the Host and replace mask. You are to leave by the center aisle and the main entrance, again at 6' intervals. **The side doors are NOT to be used except in an emergency.** Please do not congregate on church grounds. The health of everyone is our primary concern.

We are aiming to open the church for weekend Masses June 6/7 and daily Mass beginning June 8th. The Mass times and to confirm the opening date will be communicated by Constant Contact to our parishioners.