



18 May 2020

Dear Parishioner:

What **anticipation** and **joy** we feel as we look forward to resuming, *carefully and as safely as possible*, our coming together for public worship! *“I rejoiced when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the Lord.””* (Ps. 122:1)

In developing the plan for Our Lady of Victory to re-open, we have used as our guide and rule(s): ***The guidelines produced by the (national) Centers for Disease Control, the State of Ohio, the Ohio Department of Health, the Ohio Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Diocese of Cleveland.***

Additionally, we are blessed to have members from our Parish Pastoral and Finance Councils, along with other key individuals who, in just one short week, have pulled together to plan and prepare, and who will continue to help us as we slowly and responsibly move forward. ***A full return to Parish life will happen, but slowly, deliberately and carefully, so as to make certain protocols are in place to minimize the risk, to the extent possible, of the spread of the COVID-19 disease, not only in our parish community, but beyond. The re-opening of our Church for public worship is the first of many steps moving forward, and a significant one that we have taken very seriously and which is quite involved. It will require the full cooperation of each and every member – in CHARITY, with COMPASSION, UNDERSTANDING and PATIENCE.***

As we proceed, there may be revisions that will be made, but we needed the best possible starting point at this time.

I wish to thank **all** who have helped your parish thus far in this current next step (as there are so many, many individuals who have been so extremely helpful and supportive since this all began in mid-March): Members of the “Forward with Christ” Task Force: Pam Breiding, (Doctor) Marty Cochran, Brian Hovest, (Mayor) Dave & Sue Kline, (Nurse) Paula Kmet, Don McMullen, (Fire Chief) Mike Passarelli, Ken Rusinoff, Mark & (Nurse) Mary Beth Van Winkle, Rob Vogliano, Teresa Walsh, Amy Warzinski, Fr. Mike and Linda Herold. I wish to also thank Jean McNosky, our Parish Secretary, who has been non-stop with us in working to meet the many needs that have surfaced during these past few months.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE:

- **Per the CDC, individuals at higher risk should continue to observe the “Stay-at-Home” guideline: 65 or older and/or chronic and underlying medical conditions; a temperature of 100.4°; anyone not feeling well. Go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>, for a detailed list.**
- **The dispensation from the obligation to attend/participate in Sunday Mass throughout the Diocese of Cleveland and the State of Ohio remains in effect.**
- **Weekday and weekend Masses, along with Adoration, Evening Payer, Holy Hour, Night Prayer/Eucharistic Visitation will continue to be “live streamed” on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/ourladyofvictorychurchtallmadge/>; Uploaded to Vimeo at: <https://www.vimeo.com>; YouTube at: <https://www.YouTube.com> (Search for “Our Lady of Victory Tallmadge”, and you will be taken to our page)**

Upon arrival at the Church property, it will be abundantly clear as to what each of us is being asked to do, *in CHARITY, with COMPASSION, UNDERSTANDING and PATIENCE*, for safety and wellbeing of each other and our community:

LOVE GOD (Sanitize your Hands!) – LOVE OTHERS (Wear a Mask!) – MAKE DISCIPLES! (6 feet apart!).

Signs will be around the property/walkways to communicate this message as well as help guide each individual to observing social distancing.

Be aware that:

- Both **BEFORE** and **AFTER, EVERY TIME** the Church is occupied for any reason, **it is sanitized, including pews, kneelers, restrooms, door handles, light switches, microphones, any/and all hard surfaces.**
- The **drinking fountain** has been covered and is not available for use at this time.
- All **Holy Water Fonts** have been emptied and will remain empty at this time.
- The **Family Room** is not available for use at this time (the Restroom does remain available, but only **1** individual or a **family** may occupy it at a time. “Occupied/Unoccupied” locks have been installed on this and the other Men/Women’s Restrooms.)
- Socializing either before or after Mass is not to take place inside the Church building and, if done outside, should be respectful of social distancing.
- *****With the necessity for social distancing, other protocols and elimination of personal/close contact with others, the customary roles exercised by Greeters and Ushers have been suspended at this time. A “new” Ministry has begun. Saint Julian, who is the Patron Saint of Ushers, Greeters, Hospitality and Welcome Ministers, is our model for the new Saint Julian Ministry.***

BEFORE MASS, WHAT WILL YOU SEE AND EXPERIENCE:

- All **Song Books/Hymnals** have been removed from the Church (along with all pamphlets, books, etc.)
- All **Missalettes** have been removed from the Church (a limited supply is available at the Parish Center Offices Monday through Friday during normal office hours. We ask for a donation if possible to cover the cost of these.)
- All (Saint) **Julian Ministers** will be masked and wear gloves when they are ministering.**
- **Social distancing will be followed to every extent possible (6 feet of distance between individuals who are not family members living in the same household)**
- **A strict sanitization plan must be put in place.** Doors will be propped or held open. One of our (Saint) **Julian Ministers** will provide **all** entering the building with a shot of **Hand Sanitizer**. Once you have entered, another (Saint) **Julian Minister** will be at a *Sanitization Cart* to provide **Masks** for any who may not be wearing a Mask or do not have one. **MASKS ARE REQUIRED** (“or other facial covering”) for all* who will be entering the Church. ****IF POSSIBLE, THIS APPLIES ALSO TO CHILDREN OVER 2 YEARS OF AGE.***
- Additionally, you are encouraged to bring your own small bottles of Hand Sanitizer or Sanitizer Wipes should you wish to sanitize your hands at any time during the celebration of Mass.
- **For those entering via the south or west doors off the parking lot,** another (Saint) **Julian Minister** will be positioned right as you enter into the body of the Church to provide you with whatever worship aid may be needed for Mass. ***These will not be collected at the end of Mass nor are they to be left in the pews. They are yours to take with you. Any items that remain in the pews after Mass has ended will be discarded.***
- You will be invited to move down the **Center Aisle (which will be marked to indicate 6 feet increments)** of the Church to an available pew either on the North side of the Church or the South side of the Church (***NOT THE ALCOVE***). Seating will be done from the first available pew(s) nearest the Sanctuary, toward the back

of the Church, nearest the steps, and can **only** be accessed via the **Center Aisle**. Another (Saint) **Julian Minister** will be upfront to assist and direct you to an available pew.

- Once at the pew, you are to take an available seat (**all pews have been marked to aid you in maintaining social distancing, with an empty pew/unavailable for seating between each available pew, again, to maintain social distancing**) beginning nearest the wall and moving toward the Center Aisle until that pew is at capacity for social distancing. **Families that live in the same household may be seated together; 6 feet of social distance will be observed for any other individual who may be able to be seated in that pew. Should you need to leave your pew for any reason, you are to use the side aisle, only, closest to the wall.**
- There will be designated/reserved pews for Liturgical Ministers and (Saint) Julia Ministers.
- **For those entering via the Alcove Entrance, WHICH HAS BEEN DESIGNATED HANDICAP ENTRANCE ONLY (along with any individual needed to accompany them),** the door will be propped or held open. One of our (Saint) **Julian Ministers** will provide **all** entering the building with a shot of **Hand Sanitizer**.
- Once you have entered, another (Saint) **Saint Julian Minister** will be at a *Sanitization Cart* to provide **Masks** for any who may not be wearing a Mask or do not have one. **MASKS ARE REQUIRED** (“or other facial covering”) for all who will be entering the Church. **PLEASE NOTE THAT FOR ANY WHO ARE NOT HANDICAPPED, YOU ARE TO ENTER THE BUILDING EITHER THROUGH THE WEST OR SOUTH DOORS OFF THE BACK PARKING LOT.**
- Another (Saint) **Julian Minister** will be positioned right as you enter into the body of the Church to provide you with whatever worship aid may be needed for Mass and direct you on how to move to an available pew (seating, as in the main body of the Church, has been arranged to maintain 6 feet of social distancing, with families living in the same household able to sit together.)
- **Worship aids will not be collected at the end of Mass nor are they to be left in the pews. They are yours to take with you. Any items that remain in the pews after Mass has ended will be discarded.**
- Arrows directing one way entrance and one way exit have been marked on the floor, as well as markings to help guide you (6 feet apart) for social distancing.

DURING MASS:

- Once Mass begins (**or**, in the event our allowable seating capacity has been reached), the Church doors will be closed and locked, as there is no way to safely monitor occupancy at that time. **Arrangements are in process to allow for overflow seating, still respecting the requirement for social distancing, in Finnerty Hall, where Mass will be live streamed and viewable in the Hall, and Communion will be brought to those who are in the Hall. Our hope is to have this available by Pentecost weekend – May 30th/31st.**
- Again, while families may be seated together, 6 feet of social distancing is to be maintained between a family and others who may be seated in the same pew.
- Masking and 6 feet of social distancing, recommended by the CDC and others, has proven to help mitigate the spread of the disease **when speaking**. **Singing**, because of the increase in airflow out of the body, has shown in many situations that 6 feet is not as effective in this case. **In light of the scientific and medical information, congregational singing and choral singing at public liturgies is temporarily suspended, with church choir rehearsals also not being permitted at this time.**
- There will be **one** instrumentalist at this time, and keyboard/organ (instruments that science and medicine permit/support) will be the only instruments used. There will be one Cantor, as well (who plays the piano/organ). While he remains significantly socially distant (supported by science and medicine) the singing will be limited since it is not intended to replace what we, those gathered for worship are called to do, but add some sense of beauty and vocal prayer to our celebrations of Mass and liturgy.
- Because of the need for social distancing, no Servers will minister at the Masses at this time.
- There will be **1** Lector for each celebration of Mass (a Zoom Lector training has been scheduled).
 - Presider and Lector will not share the same Ambo/Lectern nor microphone.

- There will be 2 Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion for each celebration of Mass (a Zoom Extraordinary Minister training is to be scheduled).
- Collections (pew by pew with the collection baskets) will not take place at this time. *Secure/locked containers have been placed on the wall in the back of the Church right as one enters into the worship space. Also, in the Alcove area just inside the second door. You are asked to place your Sunday contributions in the slot in these containers, as the faithful financial stewardship support of your parish is necessary and greatly appreciated.* Remember, if you are an envelope user, you are invited to consider using Faith Direct, a way to electronically give, making financial support of your parish easier and more consistent (and offers the ability to use credit cards to make your donations). To sign-up on-line, go to: <https://membership.faithdirect.net/OH669>, or use “Text-to-Give” at: (330) 969-6310, or stop by the Parish Center Offices, Monday thru Friday during business hours and pick up a form to complete and mail in. *Thank you for your consideration.*
- **Offertory Processions** are suspended at this time.
- The **Sign of Peace** is omitted at this time.
- **(Saint) Julian Ministers (gloved and masked at this time)** will assist in the orderly procession for the reception of Communion so as to ensure 6 foot distancing coming forward. Lines, marking 6 foot distancing will be found in the Center Aisle to assist those coming forward for Communion.
- Only the **Body of Christ (consecrated host)** will be distributed at this time (**not** the **Precious Blood**), and instructions will be given verbally to the Assembly before the distribution of Communion.
 - **All** Communion Ministers are to be **masked** and **sanitize** their hands **before** and immediately **after** distributing Communion (this includes the Presider).
- For any who are gluten intolerant, they are to check in with the Presider before the start of Mass as the procedure has changed slightly for their reception of Communion.

“For the health and safety of all, reception of Holy Communion is strongly encouraged in the hand so as to avoid contact with an individual’s saliva, as this will also necessitate the Minister of Communion sanitizing between communicants.”

WHEN RECEIVING COMMUNION

- **One Minister will minister to the Alcove area only. To any unable to come forward, the Minister will come to you, as they have prior to this time.**
- **Those coming forward (Alcove area) will follow the pattern they have become familiar with: coming forward one way and returning to their pew another way.**
- **Whether in the Alcove area or the main body of the Church, communicants are to maintain 6 feet of social distancing as they move down the Aisle to approach the Minister.**
- **Present one hand out toward the minister resting on the palm of the other hand.**
- **Bow.**
- **After the Minister has announced, “Body of Christ”, respond “Amen” WITH YOUR MASK ON.**
- **The host will be placed in the palm of your hand.**
- **Lift your mask (or pull it below your chin) placing the consecrated host reverently in his/her mouth, then, immediately moving your mask back into place, returning to your pew by means of the side aisle.**

COMMUNION TO THE HOMEBOUND

“Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are not permitted to take Holy Communion to the sick/[homebound] for the duration of the Pandemic for their good and the good of their families.” For those desiring Communion in these cases, contact Fr. Mike at the Parish Center.

AFTER MASS:

- **(Saint) Julian Ministers** will assist in an orderly and safe exit from the Church, beginning with the back pews first and moving forward down the pews toward the Sanctuary, which will be last. A similar process will take place for any seated in the Alcove area.
- **EXIT** your pew from the side aisle (nearest the wall).
- Those seated on the **NORTH** side of the Church must exit the building through the **WEST** doors; those seated on the **SOUTH** side of the Church must exit the building through the **SOUTH** doors. Those seated in the **ALCOVE** area must exit the building through the **ALCOVE** door.
- **Sanitize your hands** once **you have left** the Church building.
- A **(Saint) Julian Minister (gloved and masked)** will hand you a Bulletin as you prepare to leave the Church.
- All worshippers are asked to **leave** the Church, and not attempt to gather in the Church, as the Church will be locked to allow for sanitization (by volunteer teams) before the next Mass. Should you desire, you may socialize **observing responsible protocols** outside the building.

MISCELLANEOUS (but no less IMPORTANT):

As difficult as these protocols may appear to be, they are necessary at this time for the safety and wellbeing of not only our parishioners but the public as well.

We desire nothing more than to return to Parish life as we were able to experience it prior to the middle of March, but, we must do so carefully and safely, and it will take some time, so, again, we ask for **CHARITY, COMPASSION, UNDERSTANDING and PATIENCE.**

Until such time as protocols can be established for the safe resumption of other areas of Parish life:

- **No public meetings of Councils, Commissions, Committees, Groups or Organizations will take place in person** at this time. In the meantime, we will work on “meeting” virtually (using Zoom, for example).
- **No “social” gatherings, such as Coffee and Donuts, Sponsi, etc.,** will take place at this time.
- **No Funeral Meals will be able to be offered** at this time.
- **No “in person” Liturgy of the Word with Children will take place at this time.** We will video this each week, and upload it on Vimeo and YouTube in time for Sunday viewing.
- **We will continue to use Room 101 of the Parish Center to:**
 - **Maintain the presence of the Blessed Sacrament for prayer and adoration from outside.**
 - **Offer Adoration/Evening Prayer/Holy Hour/Visit with a friend (live streamed and uploaded) twice weekly**
 - **Offer Night Prayer/Visit with a friend (live streamed and uploaded) three times weekly**
 - **Look for other offerings, such as “Not Mass but Class”, “Scripture Study”, “Friday Morning Live with Fr. Mike and Linda” and other things to help feed our spiritual lives, as we are able.**
- **We will work on putting together a plan for the safe resumption of the public celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the near future.**
- **We will work on rescheduling the final segments of formation and preparation for those who were to be Confirmed and those who were to receive First Communion, and also reschedule these celebrations, advising families and candidates within the next several weeks of these dates/events, once we can put together plans to celebrate them safely.**
- **We will work on rescheduling the Sacraments of Initiation for our Elect and Candidates who were to have celebrated these at the Easter Vigil and after.**

As you can see, there is still a great deal of work that lies ahead, but with God’s grace and the blessing of so many dedicated members of this community, God will see us through this and be with us every step of the way.

While the above deals primarily with the weekend Masses, with minor adjustments, this will be the protocols for all Masses celebrated in our Church, including weekday Masses.

While our **first** day back in Church for public worship will take place on **Monday, May 25th (Memorial Day) for the 8:30 AM Mass**, this will be a “prelude” to opening up for the weekend of Pentecost, May 30th/31st.

Again, as stated earlier in this letter and throughout the letter, for us to remain “open”, we must maintain strict sanitization protocols, all of which, in addition to cost, take time to complete.

Because of this, **please make note of the NEW Mass Schedule that begins on Monday, May 25th:**

Weekday Mass:

Monday thru Thursday – 8:30 AM

Note: the Church will be unlocked at 8:00 AM and then locked for the remainder of the day at 10:00 AM. The Church will not be open and available on Fridays, at this time.

Weekend Mass(es):

Saturday, Vigil – 5:00 PM

Note: the Church will be unlocked at 4:30 PM and then locked once Mass has begun and then again after Mass has concluded.

Sunday – 8:30 AM, beginning Sunday, May 31st.

Note: the Church will be unlocked at 8:00 AM and then be locked once Mass has begun and then again after Mass has concluded.

The time change was necessary to allow for proper sanitization of the Church prior to admitting new worshippers into the Church at 10:30 AM for the 11:00 AM Mass.

Sunday – 11:00 AM

Note: the Church will be unlocked at 10:30 AM and then be locked once Mass has begun and then again after Mass has concluded.

Also included with this mailing is a copy of the seating layout as well as the directions for use of the Church aisles entering and exiting the Church.

May we, in the days and weeks ahead, continue to thank God for bringing us through these trying times, and may we never cease ***Leaning on the Lord!!***

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Reverend Michael A. Matusz,
Pastor

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HOW WE WILL COME BACK TOGETHER

