



## Our Lady of Sorrows Church

801 Main St., PO Box 326

Vestal, NY 13851-0326

607.748.8287

June 9, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

The first phase of our reopening the doors has been going smoothly. This weekend, June 13-14, the feast of Corpus Christi, we enter the next phase. In the State's plan churches have not been included because the different parishes, denominations and faiths have vastly different lay-outs and numbers. Thus, there is not a statewide number, but 25% of the capacity as outlined by fire-codes. Our church's capacity is 718, and with chairs only in the gym it is 350. I am excluding the chapel so it may be utilized for family needs, etc. We will be able to have 188 people in the church and 88 in the gym.

As we open, it is not business as usual, guidelines for distancing and reducing "crowds" are still in place. We also have a 40-minute time limit. Thus, other than even shorter homilies, be prepared for the following.

Those who are ill and vulnerable are asked to remain at home, our Masses will still be broadcasted, pay attention to our web site, [olsvestal.org](http://olsvestal.org) for details. Please, note:

- **The dispensation from obligation continues, especially for high risk people due to:**
  - Over 65
  - Chronic diseases related to heart or lungs
  - Immune deficiency due to disease or cancer treatments
  - Diabetes

### **THIS PHASE: June 13-14**

- Our Mass schedule will be 5:15 pm Saturdays, 8:30 & 11 am Sundays.
- Registration is requested for the sheer need of knowing numbers. Also, the Health Department wishes us to assist in tracking people if someone is later diagnosed with Covid-19. **Register by going to our website and following the prompts, or by calling (607) 748-8287.**
- Masks are to be worn. Masks and hand sanitizer are the responsibility of the attendee.
- We will have **Hospitality Leaders** giving directions and assistance.
  - The number of people who will be allowed to enter the buildings will be limited to 25% capacity. Beyond those registered we will count and then close doors.
  - Many pews will be roped off. Households may sit together, but not family members from other households unless there is six feet of distance. Except for "singles" we would anticipate one household per each end of the pew, with six feet distance between households. *(If you live together you may sit together, if you don't live together, you don't sit together).*
- Your masks are to be worn into Church and throughout Mass. Eucharistic Ministers will wear masks when distributing communion. Readers will wear masks except when they proclaim the Word and Universal Prayer.

- Gloves may be worn, except to distribute or receive Communion.
- When receiving communion, the line needs to be spread out. There will be blue tape on the floor, please do not move forward until the next blue line is available, **Hospitality Leaders** will give directions (like the grocery store or Post Office). It will take longer.
  - We will only distribute the Host (it will be a long time before we make the Precious Blood available again). Please, receive in the hand only! If necessary, I will distribute to people on the tongue with the use of tongs after Mass. Eucharistic Ministers will need to stop and sanitize if they make skin to skin contact.
  - Please sanitize your hands before and after receiving.
- We will be using the projection in the Church for hymns. In the Gym song sheets will be available.
- Eucharistic Ministers will be able to take communion to family members who are not in attendance.
- For collections, we ask that people place their donation in the basket as they enter the Church or Gym. We will **NOT** have ushers taking up the collection.
- When it is time to leave follow the directions of the **Hospitality Leaders**, so we do not have crowds of people leaving all at once. People may not gather in the Gathering Space.
- The Mass is concluded with the Recessional Hymn
- The Church and Gym will be sanitized after each Mass.
- By entering the property and the buildings, you assume all risk.

We will schedule **Hospitality Leaders** as we do Readers, Greeters, Eucharistic Ministers and Altar Servers. **Hospitality Leaders** will count people as they enter, be available to answer questions, and direct people at Communion and exiting. If you are able to serve as a **Hospitality Leader** please contact Kathy O'Brien, ([kathy@olsvestal.org](mailto:kathy@olsvestal.org)). Altar Servers should be 12 +. We will need many more people to assist in this endeavor. You will be provided with a detailed list of directions.

For each Mass we will need readers, 2-5 Eucharistic Ministers, depending on the Mass: 6 **Hospitality Leaders**, and 1 Altar Server.

Our staff is wonderful and have gone above and beyond their responsibilities to keep our parish on solid ground. Please be sure to thank them.

Continue Again, I am sorry for such a long letter. It will be great to see people, especially now as the hair is out of my eyes!!

Sincerely,



Rev. John P. Donovan  
Pastor