

St. Mary
NEW ALBANY



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September 10, 2020

Good afternoon, good folks,

I hope you and your families are well. We are six months into the pandemic. I thought it would be over by now. It isn't, and we can't give up on our efforts to keep people safe. One of my Franciscan brothers died last night in Louisville from the virus. He was a good man and we will miss him.

Here at the parish we are doing all we can to keep people safe.

We are back to our normal Mass schedule, both during the week and on weekends. Now everyone is required to wear a mask in church. We have roped off every other pew and no one can be closer than six feet from someone who is not of their own household. We have sanitizer available at the doors. We have eliminated the processions at the beginning and end of Mass, as well as at offertory and Communion. Parishioners do not get in line for Holy Communion; our Communion Ministers take Holy Communion to each one, following clear anti-virus protocols. The priest is careful to not breathe on the hosts either before nor after consecration. We have made every effort to avoid agglomerations at the end of Mass as well, with the ushers releasing people pew by pew. We use just one reader and no servers, and the Communion Ministers stay outside the sanctuary. We have taken the hymnals and Scripture books out of the pews, as well as all pamphlets and other things which might be touched by more than one person. After each Mass we sanitize anything that has been touched, including the bathrooms.

I am also back in the confessional at the normal times, but have rearranged it so that the penitent is six feet away from the priest and after each confession anything that the penitent has touched is sanitized.

We are broadcasting our weekday and Sunday morning Masses on our St. Mary of the Annunciation FaceBook page, but I am even more proud of two nondigital initiatives of the parish in the time of the pandemic: The phone tree to check in on parishioners (if you haven't been called, please let us know your current phone number!) and the groups that pray the rosary nightly. You are invited to join our 9 p.m. conference call rosaries hosted by Ruth Watson (978.990.5000, access code 571413) and the Zoom rosaries (after you download the Zoom app you can join a video meeting hosted by Mary and Dave at 8:55 by going to the Zoom home page, clicking on "join" and then entering Mary's meeting identification #: 3401228914).

On First Fridays we have begun a beautiful Eucharistic Adoration from 8 p.m . till 6 a.m. in the Archangel Gabriel room in the Pastoral Life Center (school building), in addition to brief Adoration immediately after First Friday Masses.



Just about all the parish groups are meeting again, either in person or at a distance. Catholic Faith Formation for children and youth began in person, on August 26. Laura Hanks resigned so we now have a new Catechetical Leader, Jane Richardson, who is a long -time member of the parish. Welcome, Jane! There are 90 kids registered in religious education this year and we are using every space available in the Pastoral Life Center so we have adequate social distancing, besides using masks and sanitizer.

This past weekend sixty children made their First Holy Communion. It was such a special occasion. On October 17 the Archbishop will be here at St Mary's to Confirm thirty of our young men and women, in addition to eleven from St. John Starlight and nine from St. Mary Navilleton. I should add that we've had nineteen Baptisms, five weddings, and two fifteenth birthday celebrations within Mass, since the beginning of the pandemic.

I enclose a flyer from our upcoming Yard Sale (October 9-10) and our 2019-2020 yearly parish financial report.

May the Lord bless and keep you,

Frian Mank