



Holy Family Parishioners,

We have been missing you! Thank you to those who have been reaching out and checking in with us during this difficult time when we have not been able to gather as a parish family. We are grateful for your continued support of our parish. We want to give you some information regarding what attending Mass will look like when we are able to gather again. Please read carefully as there is a lot to take in. The first public Mass at Holy Family will be held Saturday, May 30 at 5pm followed by the 9 and 11am Masses on Sunday, May 31. Weekday 9am Masses will be held Wed-Friday beginning on June 3. Recently you should have received a letter from Bishop Walkowiak regarding the planned policy changes that are being implemented by the Diocese of Grand Rapids. Holy Family will be following those directives and putting our own policies in place to keep you safe and make you feel comfortable attending Mass. Below you will see new policies that will be put in place beginning May 30. Please approach this reopening phase with patience and caution. We want the reopening to be successful so that we do not have to suspend public Masses again. The risks of COVID-19 remain, and we must follow these regulations to safeguard the health of everyone in our community.

Bishop Walkowiak has granted a dispensation from your obligation of attending Sunday Mass through June 30. We recommend people stay at home if they are considered vulnerable due to age (over 60) or underlying health conditions.

If you are sick or have cold/flu like symptoms, please refrain from coming to Mass or entering the building. Our goal is to keep everyone safe and healthy.

Upon entering the building, everyone over the age 2 will be required to wear a mask. *We understand this may be difficult for parents with young children, please show them grace and encourage them for trying.

Please plan to use hand sanitizer upon entering the building. If you have your own, we would appreciate you bringing it yourself as it is in high demand now and supplies are low.

Social distancing will need to take place (staying 6 feet away from one another other than immediate family members). When we can gather again for Mass the Diocese has stated we will only be able to have 25% capacity for Mass and keep the 6-foot social distancing policy. Our church holds 650 people therefore at 25% capacity that only allows us to let approximately 162 people attend each Mass. Our normal attendance on a Sunday 9am or 11am Mass is typically 300+ people. We are hopeful that this directive will be eased soon, and we will be able to get back to our normal attendance, but in the meantime, we will be limiting the amount of people attending.

Because we are only able to accommodate a smaller number of our parishioners at each Mass, we know that not everyone will be able to attend Mass every weekend. We are asking that if you have the flexibility and can attend a weekday Mass in lieu of Sunday Mass during this transition period to please do so. The Bishop has granted dispensation from Sunday Masses through June 30 so that those that are not comfortable coming to a larger gathering do not have to but also can attend a smaller weekday Mass.

During this reopening period, we will be using SignUp Genius to have parishioners sign up for which Mass they would like to attend. We are hopeful that this will allow us to help control the number of attendees ahead of time. We are asking you to go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0444ACA828A4F58-welcome> First choose your Mass time then scroll to the bottom and click "Submit and Sign Up". It will ask you for your name and email and number in your party. Then it will ask you to submit again. You can sign up for multiple weekends at one time if you know your schedule. If your plans change you can go back in and edit your sign up. We will be sending this link to the sign up in our Constant Contacts weekly, so you do not need to copy it down.

- We know that not everyone will want to or be able to sign up electronically. We are trying to let those of you who will use the service know how many people are planning on attending so that our attendance is not too large and we don't have to turn anyone away from a Mass. For those that do not want to or are unable to use the electronic

- We know that not everyone will want to or be able to sign up electronically. We are trying to let those of you who will use the service know how many people are planning on attending so that our attendance is not too large and we don't have to turn anyone away from a Mass. For those that do not want to or are unable to use the electronic service we would like you to call the parish office by noon on Friday and let us know which Mass you would like to attend and we will add you to our list. We are hopeful that we will only have to do this process for a short time until we are able to have larger gatherings.
- How will we be able to social distance? We have blocked off every other pew. Please do not attempt to sit in a blocked off pew. Once in the pew, you will need to stay 6 feet apart from any non-family member in your pew. Immediate families that arrive together will be able to sit side by side.
- The main entrance door B will be the only entry that will be open. The other entrance doors will remain locked to entry but can be used for exiting. The reason for this is that we will be required to count people as they enter the building so that we do not exceed our limit of attendees.
- If you typically use a handicap entrance other than door B please plan to drop off at the main entrance. If this is not possible, please contact the parish office no later than noon on Friday to make arrangements for assistance.
- You will find white tape on the floors once entering the building to help you with your social distancing efforts.
- Fr. Loc will explain all new procedures during Mass the first few weekends we are able to gather.
- There will only be a cantor and musician. The Breaking Bread books have been taken out of the pews for now.
- During this transition period there will be no Eucharistic Set Up personnel or Eucharistic Ministers. Fr. Loc will also not be using Altar Servers. This is for your safety and the safety of Fr. Loc.
- We will be suspending the sign of peace during Mass.
- The baskets will not be passed for the Sunday collections. Baskets will be located at the entry doors to the church for you to drop your contributions either before Mass or as you leave if you are not using one of our online tithing programs.
- There will be no holding hands during the Our Father prayer. For your health and safety and for the health and safety of the Eucharistic Ministers we recommend that you receive the Body of Christ in your hand, but if you choose to receive on your tongue you will not be turned away. Gloves may not be worn to receive the Body of Christ.
- Communion will look a bit different as each section of the church will move forward one at a time, using the 6-foot social distancing guidelines. Fr. Loc will explain this and ushers will let you know what to do.
- Departure from Mass will be done differently. Ushers will excuse you by pew. We ask that you stay in your pew until you are directed to leave so we can keep our social distancing. This is much like what you would see at a wedding.
- Pews will be wiped down after each Mass by the ushers. If you are able to help wipe down pews after Mass, we would appreciate your help! Please see an usher for directions.
- There will be no access to Holy Family Center Hall, St. Mary's Halls, St. Joseph Hall, or the lower level of the building. There will also be no access to the chapel or the nursery.
- The restrooms in the Narthex and the Ministry Hallway will be available for you to use and will be cleaned after every Mass.
- Coffee and donuts and all other events where more than 10 people gather have been cancelled until further notice.
- We ask that after Mass you do not stay in the Narthex (entryway of the church) and gather but that you go outside the building. Parking lot gatherings are allowed at your own risk.

We know that gathering for Mass will look and feel different. The most important thing is that we are able to hold a public Mass and gather together as our Holy Family family. We ask for your patience as we are working through this difficult time and trying to keep everyone healthy and safe. We know that no plan is perfect, and we may need to make changes as we go along and the directives from the Diocese of Grand Rapids change. As always, please give the parish office a call at 616-891-9259 if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing you all soon!