

EXIT STRATEGY?

This last week, at the Our Lady of Mercy Pastoral Council meeting, we discussed the continuing transition out of “Pandemic Mode,” amidst the varying contexts of statistics withing the geographical areas of our Diocese, and lack of certainty when our Diocese will return to “normal”—whatever that might mean. (Translation: Erie County is not the same as Genesee County.) Among other considerations, the conversation led to the discussion of eliminating Mass reservations at Our Lady of Mercy in LeRoy. These reservations, with the accompanying weekly seating charts have been helpful to the ushers in seating, in a timely manner, people with or without reservations. At St. Brigid, since there are an ample number of ushers assisting, the experimentation with reservations was short-lived and they have done without it from early on. At Our Lady of Mercy, as time goes on, the number of reservations is decreasing, while the number of people attending in person is increasing. We shall approach this reality in the following way:

1. Beginning with all Masses at Our Lady of Mercy on the **Weekend of Sunday, July 4th**—Independence Day—we will declare *independence from Mass reservations*.
2. We will continue to make use of ushers to help seat people according to the guidelines passed on to us from the diocese. (Seats will still be reserved in strategic positions for ushers and readers.)
3. We encourage, ask, and outright beg for more people to volunteer to be ushers at Our Lady of Mercy to assist with seating, and we urge all parishioners to be charitable and flexible with those generously offering this assistance. If you are able and willing to do so, please leave a message at the parish center.
4. When needed, overflow seating will be available in the OLM parish center with the Mass streamed on the television monitor as we did at Easter morning Masses. [This will require some brief instruction (and/or help typing up instructions) so more than one person will be able to set the television monitor on the Mass.] Communion will be brought to the parish center at the proper time by a priest, deacon, or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion (with proper instruction/training) as needed.

HOLY COMMUNION AFTER SUNDAY MASS

As you know, beginning on Palm Sunday we ceased having the priest wait in the sanctuary for 45 minutes following Sunday Masses at Our Lady of Mercy. This had been offered as a service to those participating via the Livestream. For several weeks leading up to Palm Sunday, we expressed our willingness and desire to accommodate parishioners on an individual basis. To date, there have been arrangements made for only one person/household to receive Holy Communion after Mass. If you know anyone who still needs to participate from home, but desires to receive Communion afterward at the church, or by having Communion brought to them at home (from either parish), please have them contact Fr. Matthew, Fr. Ken, or Deacon Dave so arrangements can be made. If they are afraid to contact us directly for some reason, we encourage you to help them by being an intermediary. (The same principle applies to the sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick.)

COLLECTION BASKET

Throughout the pandemic, we had ceased using the collection baskets on Sunday. Beginning with the Sunday Masses on May 9th, we will resume the practice in both parishes. You are still welcome to drop your envelopes in the candle contribution/collection boxes in church (or in the parish hall at St. Brigid), mail your collection, or contribute online using WeShare at the parish website. After the baskets pass through the Church, the ushers will place the contents into the collection boxes. We will continue in this way until the diocese presents to us an updated procedure.

PARISH WEBSITE

Special thanks to Norm Pawlak from St. Brigid for his assistance in updating our parish website's "Parish Life" dropdown menu. The dropdown menu now allows one to choose a tab/page that has links to the individual pages of various groups at St. Brigid. Please look! We plan to also add a tab like this for the groups at Our Lady of Mercy. (There may also be Catholic groups in our area that, although not directly connected to one of our parishes, benefit our parishioners.) If your group is interested in having page or link through the parish website, email me at pastor@ourladyofmercyleroy.org (SUBJECT: Parish Website).

PARISH TELEPHONES

Also, thanks to Norm Pawlak's help in communicating with the company that provides our office telephone equipment, we are close to having the system completely updated. Once it is updated, it should be easier to reach us via the landlines at the parish. We thank you for your patience in this regard.

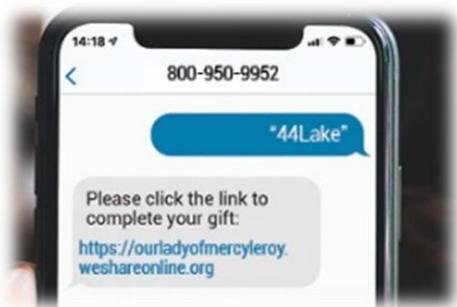
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