



ST. PATRICK CATHOLIC CHURCH

6111 Morrill Avenue
Lincoln, Nebraska 68507
(402) 466-2752

J.M.J.

May 7, 2020

Dear St. Patrick Parishioner,

Greetings in Christ! We all wish you a continued joyous Easter Season! I pray that you have found the attached prayer guides that we have been sending with these notes each week helpful in your celebration of the joy of Our Lord's Resurrection! Jesus is Risen!

My note this week will be rather extensive as I will be going over all the preparations and new procedures that we will be following to keep everyone safe as we return to the celebration of public Masses on May 11. Please find attached to this note a sheet titled "Guidelines and Safety Measures for Parishioners During Reopening". This was produced by the diocese and, as will all parishes in the diocese, we will be adhering to it as well. The easiest way to get through all the information in this note is by bullet point, so pardon the rather detached and impersonal nature of the rest of this letter.

1. I would like to emphasize the first bullet point in the general guidelines: the dispensation from the Sunday and Holy Day obligation remains in effect, even after May 11. Some of you may have to make the difficult decision to remain at home even as we reopen for Mass. Know that you are not sinning or doing anything wrong. God desires that we all remain safe. You know your circumstances and will know if that is the appropriate decision for you. The Guidelines refer to those who are encouraged to continue to remain at home. While the list is prudent and generally recommended by health professionals, that is a decision for you to make knowing your circumstances. I am supportive and will continue to hold you in my heart of prayer if you decide that it is best for you to remain at home.
2. Our Mass schedule will be the normal Mass schedule:
 - a. Daily Mass at 6:30 a.m. and 8 a.m.
 - b. Sunday Mass schedule: Saturday evening at 6:30 p.m., Sunday at 7 a.m., 8:30 a.m., 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.
3. We will be continuing to livestream a Sunday Mass on Facebook and YouTube, search for "Fr. Samuel Beardslee". We have decided to livestream the 8:30 a.m. Sunday Mass.
4. As you come to church for the weekend Masses you will notice that the outside doors will either be blocked open (in good weather) or being held open by ushers for you (in inclement weather). This is to reduce contact with common surfaces.
5. You are welcome to wear face masks for the entirety of mass. When coming up to receive communion, pull down your mask when the person in front of you is receiving



ST. PATRICK CATHOLIC CHURCH

6111 Morrill Avenue
Lincoln, Nebraska 68507
(402) 466-2752

communion. Replace your mask after you receive and have checked your hand for any remaining particles.

6. We will be placing offertory baskets on the baptismal font (which will be empty of holy water) for you to place your Sunday tithe in as you enter or leave. The ushers will NOT be coming up and down the aisles with the baskets to collect your offering during Mass as we would normally do. Please place your offering in the basket as you enter or leave.
7. Seating will respect social distancing requirements of 6 feet. Every other pew row will be blocked off as that will allow for 6 feet of separation. I want to thank the Altar Society for helping provide the beautiful and dignified blocking material. Note that family units, in other words, the people you live with, can and are asked to sit close together. A six foot separation must be maintained between family units. To help you visualize this, the center pews are 18 feet wide. Unless a family larger than 2 to 3 people are in the pew, a family unit can sit at each end of the pew and one family unit in the middle of the pew and still maintain a six foot separation between family units. If a family larger than 2 to three people is in a pew, then only one family at each side of the pew is possible. The side aisle pews are 10 feet wide, so only a single family unit can sit in each side aisle pew, unless you are a single person in which case one single person can sit at each end of the pew. Once all available spaces in the pews are filled, and only when ALL available spaces are filled (so, you may have to sit in an area you don't normally sit in. . . .), the ushers will place chairs in the narthex and in front of the front pews that are appropriately spaced for you to sit in. The area of last resort that ushers will set up chairs in for you to sit is the social hall. Once all of those areas are filled, with appropriate social distancing being maintained, will we have to tell arriving people that they will need to attend the next Mass.
8. Hymn books. On Saturday, May 9 at 10 a.m., we will be removing all hymn books and missalettes and sanitizing them. At the weekend Masses of May 16/17 we will be placing the hymn books/missalettes in the narthex. As you arrive, please take one hymn book and missalette per family, unless your family is larger than 4 people, in which case please take two. You will then keep that hymn book for the duration of the pandemic. You will take it home with you and bringing it back each week. At the end of the pandemic, we will ask you to return the hymn book. 😊
9. When approaching the front for the reception of Holy Communion, please follow the instructions of the priest as to which pew sections are to come up at what times. It is critically important that you keep a 6 foot separation between family units as you approach for communion. To help you, every other pew is a six foot gap (each pew is



ST. PATRICK CATHOLIC CHURCH

6111 Morrill Avenue
Lincoln, Nebraska 68507
(402) 466-2752

three feet apart), so if you have a two pew separation, you will be six feet apart.

10. For the celebration of Mass, only the priest, acolyte and lector/reader will be in the sanctuary. For the duration of this pandemic, we will be suspending serving by the altar boys.
11. For the dismissal of Mass, the priest will remain in the sanctuary and dismiss rows, beginning from the BACK rows. Please remain in your pew until the priest dismisses you so that we can keep appropriate distances. If you would like to remain to pray, you are most certainly welcome to do so, but then you will need to wait until the last pew has been dismissed and then you are welcome to leave.
12. After the dismissal of the last pew, we will be sanitizing all the pews, common area surfaces, restroom common surface areas and any folding chairs that were brought out for seating for that Mass. After sanitizing, the folding chairs will be removed. The sanitizing solution we will be using has been directly obtained from the actual CDC website instructions. In other words, this is not from some random website that says it is getting its information from the CDC, but rather directly from the CDC itself.
- 13. In order for all this to work, we are going to need not only your cooperation but your help as well! Specifically, I am putting out a call for help for:**
 - a. Three ushers for each weekend mass who will 1. Hold open the outer doors during inclement weather, 2. Take the collection from the baskets on the baptismal font into the sacristy during the homily, 3. Upon need, put out chairs appropriately distanced 4. Spray down the pews, etc. after Mass with the sanitizing solution. 5. Return the sanitized folding chairs to the storage area and finally 6. Inform people the church is full to arriving people if needed. If you can help in this way, please call the rectory and let Kathy know as she will be scheduling people for this task. Further detailed instructions will be given before Mass to the ushers by the priest.
 - b. Three sanitizing helpers after each weekend Mass who will wipe off the pews with fresh towels after the appropriate amount of time so that the wood is not damaged. Please contact Kathy at the rectory as she will be scheduling this.
 - c. Volunteers who are willing to launder the towels and have them ready for the next weekend Masses. Please contact Julie Lowe, president of the Altar Society by



ST. PATRICK CATHOLIC CHURCH

6111 Morrill Avenue
Lincoln, Nebraska 68507
(402) 466-2752

email at julielowe30@yahoo.com, or the rectory to help.

- d. Volunteers who are willing to make the pew blocking items. Please contact Julie Lowe, president of the Altar Society by email at julielowe30@yahoo.com, or the rectory to help.
- e. On Saturday, May 9 at 10 a.m., we will be removing all the hymn books and missalettes and sanitizing them. If you can help, please come to the social hall.

14. Some final notes:

- a. We are developing plans for confirmation and 1st Confession/1st Holy Communion. If you have children who will be receiving one of these sacraments, please keep a close eye on your email for further information.
- b. Acolytes/Lectors/Readers/Ushers, please contact Kathy at the rectory if she has not gotten ahold of you to update her on your status as to whether you are in a position to be able to continue those ministries during the pandemic.

I know we will continue to pull together as the St. Patrick family. As I'm fond of saying, some stinking virus isn't going to defeat us!! We really do need your help, though, so please contact the rectory if you can help. One way we can ALL help is by supporting each other in prayer and making contact with each other. A virus cannot take away those things. Know that you are in my prayers every day and that I can't wait to see you at mass, whenever that is possible for you! May the peace of the Risen Christ be with you!

In Christ,

Fr. Troy Schweiger