



SAINT ELIZABETH CHURCH

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Columbus OH 43229-2646

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May 14, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

I hope this finds you well in this unprecedented time of Coronavirus (Covid-19). As you know, the church has been closed since March 21/22 of this year. The good news is that St. Elizabeth Parish will have a “soft” re-opening the weekend of May 30/31 (Pentecost.) We are actively preparing to return to public Mass in a way that is as safe and prudent as possible. The purpose of this letter is to share information about the plans and precautions we are making.

The procedures for parishioners present during the celebration of Mass will be new and unlike that with which you are familiar. There will be social distancing at Mass, and it will definitely feel different. I want to put at ease anyone who is anxious about the possibility of returning to Mass. The dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass is being extended to all Catholics in Ohio until at least September 13th, 2020.

Consistent with our Governor’s direction for the State of Ohio, **we strongly encourage those 70 years or older and those with existing health conditions to continue to stay home and watch Mass through live stream outlets.** We encourage you to examine from all sides the issues affecting your safety and the safety of others when deciding to gather again with the St. Elizabeth community.

I have asked the Liturgy Committee, Staff, Parish Council and the Development Committee to provide suggestions of how to keep our parishioners safe during this time. In addition, Bishop Brennan has published his guidelines for our Diocese which we have included in this mailing.

Beginning the weekend of May 30/31, St. Elizabeth Parish will implement the following:

- Parishioners will maintain a 6-foot distance between other parishioners. (Households that arrived together will still sit together. This refers to the distance between your family/household and the next family/household.)
- Parishioners will sit only in every third row, and then keep three seat distance between your family /household and the next family/household within that row. When you arrive, you will see that the seats have been arranged to allow for limited seating.
- You will see that the hymnals have been removed from the seats.
- Offertory baskets will be placed by the baptismal font for donations as you enter or leave.
- The sign of peace will be omitted, and the gifts will not be brought to the altar in procession.
- Parishioners are asked to wear a mask the entire time while in the building. (Note: infants and small children under 2 should never wear a mask.) You may lower your mask to receive Communion.
- Communion will be received at your seat. Father will bring Eucharist to you and place it in your hand.

OVER

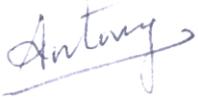
- Communion of the Precious Blood is suspended until further notice.
- The Holy Water font will remain empty.
- Both the Altar Server and Extraordinary Minister ministries are suspended until further notice.
- Greeters will be expected to wear a mask and gloves.
- You should not expect to be able to use the restrooms while in the building.

A word about the offertory - I am truly encouraged by your continued generosity to the parish during this time! If you are able and have not done so, please consider utilizing WeShare for electronic offertory donations. You can mail your offertory envelope or check to St. Elizabeth Church, 6077 Sharon Woods Blvd. Columbus, Ohio 43229. However, for your own safety, please do not mail cash.

As you can see, things will be quite different as we focus on keeping and safe yet, still offer Mass. The simpler experience of the Mass will be a great opportunity for all of us to focus even more attention on the single greatest reason we gather: to encounter the Risen Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

Should you have any ideas or would like to volunteer for a working committee, please email the parish council at parishcouncil@stelcc.org . If you do not have email and/or have any questions, please call the parish office.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Antony" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Fr. Antony Varghese, CFC
Parish Administrator