



## MARY, MOTHER OF MERCY PARISH

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OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH, GLASSBORO

OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE CHURCH, PITMAN

FR. WILLIAM KELLY, PASTOR

June 2020

Dear Parish Family,

Greetings. I pray that this important letter finds you and your family well during this pandemic. Please know you continue to be held in prayer. I write this letter as our parish plans to reopen our two churches.

We have been given guidelines from the Diocese for Phase 1 of the reopening of our churches and I want to share some of them with you. First and foremost, it is difficult to always send out a bulk mailing. Therefore, to improve communication and update our contact information, **I ask all of our parish family to either send an email to [marymomdata@gmail.com](mailto:marymomdata@gmail.com) or call 856-881-0909 with your name, address, and best phone number. This is VERY IMPORTANT for us to communicate quickly and effectively with all parishioners.**

### **Mary, Mother of Mercy Parish Reopening Guidelines During the Period Designated as Phase 1:**

1. Good news! **Our churches will open for public worship, the weekend of June 13/14, 2020 and we will follow the regular weekend Mass schedule.** The number of attendees must be limited due to social distancing restrictions. The capacity at each church (between 25-30%) will fluctuate according to the number of families/individuals at each Mass. The same is true for the daily Mass schedule which will resume on Monday, June 15, 2020. Mass times will stay the same as we are not permitted to add new masses. [*Our Lady of Lourdes Church will be open for Confessions on Saturday 6/13/2020 beginning at 3:15pm with social distancing restrictions in place.*]
2. It is important to note, in Phase 1, **the dispensation for the faithful from the obligation to participate in Mass on Sundays and Holy Days remains in effect.** Our utmost priority is the welfare of our parishioners. We encourage those who are at high risk for contracting COVID-19, the elderly, and families with young children (who may find it difficult to maintain a six-foot distance from others) to stay home during Phase I. Anyone who on any given day feels sick or has a cough should not participate in Mass or visit the church for any reason.
3. Based on public health requirements, all attending Mass **should wear a mask or face covering with the exception of children under the age of 2 years, anyone who has trouble breathing, and anyone who can't remove their face covering without assistance.**
4. Our church buildings must have only **one way to enter and one way to exit.** These access routes will be clearly marked and stationed with volunteers to assist and direct you. Please pay attention to the signs and markings outside and inside the church buildings to maintain the required *social distancing*. This same social distancing is to be maintained everywhere on the

church property. Restrooms will have volunteers at the doors to ensure only one person (or family group) at a time is using the facilities. **You are kindly asked to use your restroom at home before coming to church and use the church facilities only in case of emergency.** Please note: During this Phase 1, the Cry-Rooms, Chapels, and Church Halls will remain closed/unavailable. Churches and restrooms will be disinfected after each Mass.

5. Due to the limited occupancy permitted during Phase 1, attendance will be on a first-come basis. Churches will open 45 minutes before each scheduled Mass. Once maximum occupancy is reached, the church doors will be closed, and a volunteer will be outside of church to gently communicate to you that we are full and give you options. A sign will also be placed on the door to indicate we are at full capacity.. **This is a tough one for all of us**, but at least for the time being, we have to make the best of it. Your patience and understanding will help everyone cope with these restrictions.
6. As you approach the church entrance, your face covering should be in place. Please refrain from conversations/anything that might slow the flow of people entering. At the entrance of the church, a volunteer will have hand sanitizer for your use unless you are wearing gloves. One of our Knights of Columbus volunteers will usher you to a seat, which may not be your usual pew.
7. **Before Mass begins, one of our Priests or Deacons will go over the new procedures as well as the traffic flow pattern related to the reception of Holy Communion.**
8. The normal collection of envelopes (at the Offertory of the Mass) will not take place. However, there will be volunteers manning baskets at the doors of the church as you enter or leave. Simply deposit your envelope as you pass by. If you are not able to attend Mass, please continue to send your offering to the parish office or continue with on-line giving. Your ongoing support of our parish during this pandemic has been **OUTSTANDING. Thank you so much!**

Please be advised that the recorded Sunday Mass will continue to be posted on the Parish Facebook Page (Mary, Mother of Mercy Parish) and the Parish Website (mary-mom.com) by 10:00 AM every Sunday.

We look forward to seeing you back in church.. **We miss you!** Remember, please contact us by email or phone with your name, current address and best phone number so we can easily reach out to you.

We thank you for your anticipated cooperation, understanding and generosity during these trying times. Our prayers for you and your loved ones continue each day.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. William Kelly  
Pastor