

D I O C E S E
of NEW ULM

Office of the Bishop

May 1, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As you know, the people around the world are making their painful way through the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. In the Diocese of New Ulm, we have done our part to inhibit the spread of the virus by following the directives of our civil officials and public health professionals. The primary concerns of the diocese are the spiritual welfare of the people as well as their physical well-being.

Following the extension of Governor Walz's stay at home order until Monday, May 18, in the Diocese of New Ulm the public celebration of Mass will continue to be suspended.

The Bishops of Minnesota gathered yesterday after the Governor's speech to consider carefully our own phased approach to the lifting of the suspension on the public celebration of Masses. We prayed for the light of the Holy Spirit and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary upon our considerations. We recognized that when we return to public Masses, we will have to do so with carefully defined protocols in order to keep people safe and to prevent the spread of the virus. We know that if we work together, we can do this safely.

We plan to begin now to work with our priests and parish leaders so that we can be ready to begin some limited public Masses on Monday, May 18. We are developing a gradual, multi-phase approach to return to public worship. These phases will allow for the ability to re-evaluate the process as necessary in order to ensure the health and safety of the community going forward. Our plan presumes that throughout the state the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass will continue until such a time that it is safe for all to return.

All phases of this plan anticipate that we are following strict guidelines for social distancing and sanitization.

- Those over age 65 will be strongly encouraged not to attend. As circumstances allow, a visit from a priest, deacon, or extraordinary minister of Holy Communion to bring them the Eucharist may be possible. Also, anyone showing any symptoms of sickness, or anyone who has a household member who is sick or showing symptoms of sickness should not come to Church.
- The space will be thoroughly sanitized before and after each service, including all entryways and doors. Holy water fonts will be empty and hymnals removed.
- Signs will be posted concerning social distancing and sanitation requirements and reminders would be offered.
- Hand sanitizers will be available at all entry ways.
- All local safety orders specifically relating to proper face coverings will be followed.
- People will be instructed not to greet each other with touching.



- Signs and other instructions will encourage normal, safe practices necessary to stop the spread of infection (e.g. cough or sneeze into a shirtsleeve, handkerchief, or tissue; avoid touching the eyes, nose, and mouth to help slow the spread of germs).
- Ventilation will be increased as much as possible, opening windows and doors, as weather permits.

We are currently in phase 1. During this time, our Churches can be open daily for prayer, and priests as they are able can provide for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Confessions can happen in spaces that are well ventilated with adequate social distance yet still assure the privacy of the sacrament. It is also permissible to have weddings with no more than 10 people and funerals with no more than 10 people. Outdoor Masses and benediction where people stay in their cars, minimizing the danger of spreading infection, are also allowed.

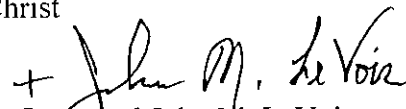
We anticipate beginning phase 2 on Monday, May 18, and will work with state officials in a collaborative way to meet that goal. During phase 2, public Masses in Churches will be allowed in smaller groups limited to no more than 1/3 of the seating capacity of the Church (every 3rd pew) in order to allow adequate social distancing between those not of the same household.

Churches will develop ways to ensure that this capacity limit is strictly followed, such as online signups and ushers. Since there will be no Sunday Mass obligation, Catholics will be encouraged to attend other masses during the week instead of Sunday in order to spread out the numbers. More Masses will need to be offered in some cases to accommodate everyone in the parish who wishes to attend Mass.

We intend to publish detailed protocols to be followed for the celebration of Mass and the distribution of Holy Communion well in advance of May 18 when public Masses will resume so that parishes can get ready for the careful way we will have to move forward. Social gatherings and other small group meetings will not be allowed during phase 2 as they do not have the same controlled movement as Mass. Some other sacramental celebrations may be allowed, but never exceeding 1/3 of the seating capacity of the Church. If a liturgical celebration or event cannot maintain the capacity and social distancing requirements, it may not take place.

At this point, it is unknown when we would be able to enter Phase 3, which would provide more opportunity for us to have larger celebrations. We will continue to evaluate and follow the guidance of civil authorities and public health experts.

In Christ



Most Reverend John M. LeVoir
Bishop of New Ulm

plf



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CEMETERY GUIDELINES WHEN PLANNING GRAVE DECORATIONS

1. Fresh flowers and potted flowers in urn stands ARE PERMITTED during the mowing season, April 1st through October 1st.
2. Shepherd hooks and solar lights are permitted and should be placed on the sides against the cement base of the marker with the basket hanging over the marker.
3. Other grave decorations are permitted from May 20th until June 10th for the Memorial Day Weekend. Decorations must be removed by June 10th. Any items left after June 10th will be removed and discarded at the discretion of the cemetery caretakers.
4. Except for Memorial Day Weekend (May 20th—June 10th), artificial flowers, plastic decorations, wreaths, statues, glass or breakable containers are NOT PERMITTED and will be removed and discarded. These things can be dangerous to the mowing crew.
5. Planting or “digging in” plants is NEVER allowed.

NOTE: Many of the artificial and plastic decorations deteriorate quickly and break apart. They are often scattered by the wind and can pose a mowing hazard. That is why they are only permitted for a short time in our cemetery.



Church of the Japanese Martyrs

Administrative Council Meeting
Tuesday, May 12, 2020 - 7:30pm

Zoom Meeting

1. Call to Order/ Prayer: *Opening Prayer led by Msgr. Lozinski: Hail Mary. Present: Deb Windschitl, Jim Hillesheim, William Schumacher, Jamie Pietig, Ronda Mathiowetz, Arla Dockter, Randy Lax, Chad Sprenger, Matt Grausam, Msgr. Lozinski, Fr. Andy Michels. Guests: Julie and Paul Anderson.*
2. Approval of Minutes/Approval of Agenda
3. Pastors comments: *Covid 19, Minnesota bishops have given us protocols to have in place before public mass/sacramental celebrations. We will be following strict guidelines for social distancing and sanitation. The insert in the bulletin explains the plan.*
4. Reports/discussion/action
 - a. Evangelization and Catechesis
 1. Religious Education – *Live-streamed Mass and May Crowning on May 6 to close program. Zoom meeting planned with teachers on May 13 for review and planning for next year. Dan Davis was a great help.*
 - b. Stewardship
 1. Financial report – *Matt Grausam reviewed financial report through April 30. We are falling way behind in our weekly collections.*
 2. Church Dinner/Festival July 26, 2020 – *won't be able to have our big dinner this year. Will still have a Big Raffle; tickets will print soon. Parishioners will get 2 books to buy/sell (more would be available). Could try to have a 10:30am Mass, hamburger/pop/beer stand, live music and pedal pull IF the governor's protocols will allow. Final decision to be made by early July.*
 3. Farm
 4. Budget – *Matt went over proposed budget for next fiscal year. Looking at a \$10,000 deficit. Adjustments would be made if one of the new priests would live in the rectory.*
 - c. Maintenance
 1. Church
 2. Rectory
 3. Office
 4. School
 5. Softball Complex – *everything at a standstill. There will be no softball/baseball this summer.*
 - d. Next meeting – *probably a short meeting in June.*

Closing Prayer: *Glory Be*

Adjournment at 8:30pm. Submitted by Deb Windschitl pending council approval.