

PARISH OF THE IMMACULATE

May 15, 2020

My dear friends,

I am happy to inform you that Bishop Medley has given all parishes in the Diocese permission to begin having public Mass, although on a restricted basis. We may begin doing so as of May 20th but no parish is required to begin then. After numerous discussions with our pastoral team, we have decided to delay our opening a while longer. We are doing this in order to insure that we have everything in place to protect the health and well-being of those who come to Mass. This means that we have all the necessary supplies on hand for sanitizing the Church and everything in it, as well as training our liturgical ministers in the various new protocols that we must follow.

We will begin daily Mass on Monday, May 25th at 7:00 a.m. and begin our week-end Masses on May 30th-31st, the Feast of Pentecost.

Attached to this letter are the specific directives issued by the Bishop. Please read them carefully. I do want to emphasize several points. First of all, the obligation to participate in Sunday Mass is dispensed until further notice. Therefore, no one should feel obligated to come to Mass, nor should anyone feel guilty if you decide not to come at this time. Anyone who is not well, or whose health is fragile or compromised in any way, definitely should not come. We will continue to live-stream Sunday Mass on Face Book and our webpage.

We are only allowed to fill the Church to one-third capacity which limits us to approximately 200 people. Some of you who are desirous of receiving Holy Communion may decide to come to one of the week-day Masses when there will be fewer people there.

I am eager for the day when we can all gather around the Lord's Eucharistic Table. Until that is possible, these restrictions are undertaken in a spirit of charity and concern for one another. Let us thank God that there are now increased opportunities for us to celebrate Mass together and let us continue to pray for an end to this terrible disease and all the dire consequences that flow from it. Thank you for your understanding and patience. This is a trying time for everyone.

Our parish office will remain closed but someone from our team will be in every day. If you need to contact us, please give us a call.

In love & prayer,



Fr. John R. Vaughan



**IMMACULATE PARISH
GUIDELINES FOR MASS ATTENDANCE**

***Please note that these guidelines are subject to change
as needed for the safety of our parish**

- If you are sick, or have been sick, or exposed to someone with COVID19, please do not enter the Church. If you are considered in the High-Risk, please worship from home.
- **CHURCH ENTRY** – everyone should **enter from the front church doors**. Side door entry will only be available to those with special mobility needs.
- The church is allowed to host 33% of its capacity, while maintaining 6 feet of distance for those in pews. This allows us a capacity of 213 persons. We will be allowing seating in every 3rd pew. Pews that are open for seating will be marked with a pew bow and taped off in 2 foot sections for ease in measuring your distance.
- A trained Usher will be in church with a 6 foot measuring device to assist with any seating questions.
- Hand Sanitizer stations are available at each church entry/exit.
- **Everyone over the age of 3 must wear a mask.** If you/your child are uncomfortable with this please continue to worship from home. We ask that you bring your own mask. We will have a limited supply on hand. If someone arrives without a mask or forgets theirs, we will be able to provide one as long as supplies are available.
- **Holy Communion will be given in the hand only (no gloved hands).** **Please wear your facemask, step to the side after receiving Holy Communion and consume the host.** Those in the single-file communion line should adhere to the 6 feet distance markings on the church floor. There will be one Eucharistic Minister at the front of church and one at the church break for those seated in the back. Ushers will assist with this process. We will not offer the Precious Blood.
- We will not shake hands during the sign of peace.
- We will not hold hands during the Our Father (permitted for same household)
- Holy water fonts will remain empty & Cry Rooms will not be available at this time.
- Hymnals and missals will be absent from pews. There will be **no communal singing.**
- Use of the bathrooms will be limited to one person at a time. The restrooms will be sanitized after each Mass.
- **COLLECTION BASKET:** The offertory collection will be collected using the poles. Ushers will collect the donations and deposit them into a large open basket on the altar. Online giving, direct account donations and mail-in donations are welcomed.
- All Mass guidelines will apply to the celebration of weddings and funerals.
- There should be no gatherings before or after Mass.
- The church and bathrooms will be cleaned and sanitized after each Mass.
- Please exit church pew by pew, starting with the back pews first.
- Thank you for your **KINDNESS, PATIENCE and UNDERSTANDING**
- **Please remember that returning to Mass will be a very individual decision. We look forward to seeing you when the time is right for you to return. We continue to pray for everyone in our community as we continue to look out with concern for one another.**