



St. Malachy Catholic Church

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June 8, 2020

To: Parish Members

From: Fr. Pakula

Dear All Parish Members,

I am pleased to announce that we plan to begin weekend Masses on Saturday, June 20, at 5:00 pm and Sunday, June 21, at 9:00 am. We will begin our return to church with only 2 Masses each weekend, but we hope to be able to return to our regular Mass schedule at least fairly soon.

I would like to extend a word of thanks to our Reopening Committee and to all the volunteers who are helping us to return to Mass.

There are some new procedures we will implement to try to make Mass attendance as safe as possible. These procedures are in compliance with CDC guidelines and diocesan directives and recommendations. Please note, however, that even with our detailed safety protocol in place, there is nevertheless always a risk involved when people gather in a public space. With this risk in mind, please use your good judgement as to whether you should attend Mass or not...And please remember that the obligation to attend Sunday Mass is still suspended.

Guidelines and other information in regard to attending Mass are detailed on the following page:

St. Malachy Catholic Church

Guidelines

- We anticipate being able to seat over 200 individuals, some of whom may be in the narthex and some even possibly in our parish hall with Mass live-streamed.
- Attendees must wear a mask at all times.
- 6 feet social distancing is required; however, family members from the same household do not need to observe social distance from each other.
- Individuals having a fever or flu-like symptoms are asked to stay home.
- Individuals who are elderly or who have underlying health conditions, such as diabetes, lung or heart issues, or cancer are strongly encouraged to stay home.
- Although our diocese has said nothing about the following, at least one dioceses is advising that it might be wise to not bring young children to Mass while we are still dealing with the pandemic – I take this to mean preschoolers – I simply offer this for the consideration of those parents to whom it applies.
- Upon entering our narthex, an individual is to have a mask on, have temperature taken by a greeter, and sanitize his/her hands.
- The greeter will then allow individual to enter the narthex and to move towards our church.
- An usher will meet the individual (or couple or family) near the doors of the church and seat the attendee(s) from the front of the church to the back of the church.
- The ushers will direct people for Communion, ensuring, as much as possible, social distancing.
- At the end of Mass, the ushers will dismiss the attendees beginning in the back of the church and moving up to the front of the church. This will be done to help maintain social distancing.
- Attendees are asked not to gather in the narthex after Mass but instead to leave the building immediately.
- After each Mass, the church, narthex, and other common areas will be sanitized.

Some changes you will see in the Mass are listed on the following page:

St. Malachy Catholic Church

Changes

- All hymnals and missalettes will have been removed.
- There will be no choir, but a musician and cantor will ordinarily be present.
- Collection baskets will not be passed from person to person, but instead, a collection basket will be placed on a stand near the baptismal font where contributions may be left.
- There will be no offertory procession to bring forward the hosts, wine, water and collection.
- There will be no exchange of peace before Communion.
- The sharing the cup with the Precious Blood will not be available.
- The faithful are strongly requested to receive Communion in hand and to avoid any physical contact with the hand of the Communion minister. If incidental hand contact occurs, the Communion minister might choose to sanitize his hand before continuing.
- Anyone who would prefer to not receive Communion at Mass is encouraged to remain in place and make an act of Spiritual Communion.
- Please note a special request: we ask attendees to not use kneelers when at Mass. We make this request because it will make it easier to sanitize the church after Mass if the kneelers are not used.

Hopefully, all these precautions will help keep us all safe as we begin to gather again as a Eucharistic community, and hopefully it will not be too long before some of these precautions will no longer be necessary.

Please let me add one additional IMPORTANT item. Once we reopen our church for Mass (June 20-21), we will also offer Communion at the front doors of the church from 10:30 – 11:00 am on Sundays for individuals whose good judgement is that it would be wise for them to not come to Mass.

Finally, my prayers remain with you, our community, our state, our country, our world.

Fr. Michael Pakula