



SAINT WILLIAM PARISH

5431 Mahoning Avenue NW

Warren, Ohio 44483

330-847-8677

May 2020

Dear Saint William Parishioner,

As the “Responsible Restart Ohio Plan” is implemented allowing a gradual return to work and the lifting of some of the restrictions regarding consumer retail and services, the Catholic Bishops of the State of Ohio have announced directives for the safe return to the public celebration of Mass.

On May 8, 2020, Bishop George V. Murry, S.J., along with the other Ohio Bishops, confirmed that the public celebration of Mass can resume on the Solemnity of Pentecost, May 30-31, 2020. Our “Welcome Back” Masses will be at 5:00 p.m. Saturday; and 8:30 a.m. and **10:30 a.m.*** Sunday. (*Note Summer Schedule Mass time). Weekday Mass will resume Tuesday, June 2, 2020 at 8:30 a.m.

The Office of Worship, in consultation with other Offices of Worship from the dioceses of Ohio, has provided *Directives and Guidelines for the Diocese of Youngstown* outlining the safe practices and procedures to be implemented for the resumption of public liturgies. They are enclosed for your review. In addition to these, some further adaptations and adjustments will be in place to ensure the safest possible environment. These include: distanced seating; disposable worship/song sheets; stationary collection baskets; and one-way Communion line patterns. Furthermore, the seating area, restrooms, and vestibule, including all door handles and push bars, will be cleaned and sanitized after each Mass.

Please note that the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains in effect for all Catholics in the Diocese for the time being. Understanding the desire of many to return to church, it remains vitally important that those most vulnerable, especially those who are sick, or at high risk of becoming sick stay home during this time. We are currently making efforts to provide a weekly live-streamed Mass from the parish to be viewed on our parish website. As soon as these details become complete a notice will be included in the bulletin and posted on the parish website.

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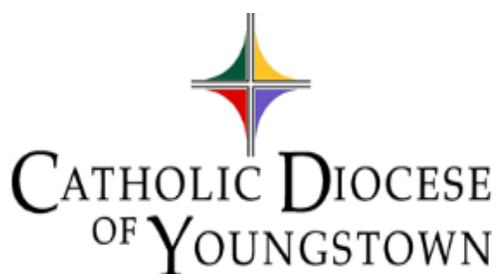
As we prepare to reopen the parish, I would like to offer my sincerest and heartfelt thanks to all of you for your kindness, support and generosity during this unprecedented time. Over the last weeks many have faithfully remained committed to your weekly contribution which has allowed us to continue to meet all of our financial responsibilities. I, along with the employees of the parish, am eternally grateful to you for your support. On a personal note, I am also sincerely appreciative of your concern and care for my well-being. Thank you for the cards, notes, and words of care, thanks, and encouragement.

When we gather on the Solemnity of Pentecost, it will have been 77 days since we celebrated the Eucharist together. Holy Week, Easter Sunday, Mother's Day, and Ascension Sunday will have passed but the "*Spirit*" will be in our midst as we come together to pray and worship. I look forward to seeing you if you are feeling well and are comfortable to gather. Things will feel and be different but one thing will never change –*the love God has for us through good times and bad, and our need to gather as His people to give thanks for the blessings that He continues to bestow.*

Thank you for all that you do for our parish. Know of my continued prayers and best wishes for you and your family and continue to be safe and strong!

All the best,

Rev. Michael D. Balash
Pastor



***Resumption of Public Liturgies in
the Time of Public Health Concern
Sunday/Weekday Mass
Directives and Guidelines for the
Diocese of Youngstown ~ May 2020***

In light of the decision to resume the celebration of public Masses and liturgies by the Bishops of Ohio, the following Directives and Guidelines are issued for all parishes of the Diocese of Youngstown. These take into consideration how to best proceed under these unusual circumstances while remaining pastorally sensitive to the People of God and adhering to restrictions issued by the State of Ohio. The guidance provided aims to clarify how such spiritual care can be responsibly offered to the faithful during this period and have been formulated with great care to preserve and respect the powerful liturgical and sacramental symbolism of the rites of the Mass. These directives/guidelines currently remain in effect by order of Bishop Murry and will be revised or changed should any further directives be issued by the Governor of Ohio, the Bishops of Ohio, or Bishop Murry. They are considered to be temporary until it is determined safe to return to the normal circumstances.

DISPENSATION FROM THE OBLIGATION TO ATTEND SUNDAY MASS

The Catholic faithful who reside in the Diocese of Youngstown and all other Catholics in the diocese and especially those who are sick, or at high risk of becoming sick continue to be dispensed from their Sunday obligation until further notice. The Easter Duty obligation is extended for a period of one year from the end of the Easter Season 2020.

➤ **General Guidelines**

1. Understanding the desire of many to return to church, it remains important for those who are at greater risk to refrain from returning until such time they feel comfortable and confident to do so.
2. Those who are symptomatic or who have been exposed to another with the virus within 14 days should not attend Mass in accordance with national, state and local health directives.
3. Parishes are encouraged to continue to live-stream Mass so that those unable to attend may maintain a spiritual connection with their local parish.
4. Appropriate cleaning of high use areas within the church is to be done before and after each service.
5. Every effort to ensure appropriate physical distancing before, during, and after liturgical celebrations is required. Methods will vary depending on capacity and arrangement of church buildings. Parishes will decide how best to configure seating to maintain proper physical distance.
6. Cry Rooms or enclosed spaces for families with small children are not available.
7. Large gatherings before or after Mass are to be discouraged. No receptions or social gatherings (*i.e. coffee/donuts*) are to be held.
8. While not mandatory, those attending Mass may wear masks or face coverings.
9. The amount of people able to be in restrooms at the same time will be posted.
10. If possible, sanitizer should be made available at all entrances.
11. Bulletins and other materials should be available for pick-up. Hospitality ministers (*ushers*) should not pass them out.

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12. All in attendance should wash their hands before and after Mass being mindful not to touch their face, eyes, or nose.
13. All in attendance should make every effort to continually model and encourage good hygienic practices.

➤ **During Mass**

Hymnals/Missalettes

- All hymnals/missalettes are to be removed and stored for the time being. At each Mass, disposable worship aids should be distributed and then discarded.

Offertory Collection

- The practice of passing baskets throughout the assembly is temporarily suspended. Some options are to use traditional long-handled baskets or to place stationary baskets at the entrance of the church for those attending to drop their offering at the beginning of Mass.

The Lord's Prayer and Sign of Peace

- Physical contact during the Lord's Prayer (*holding hands*) and the Sign of Peace is suspended. For the Sign of Peace those present are encouraged to bow to others and offer words of peace.

Receiving Holy Communion

- It is highly encouraged and strongly recommended that the reception of Holy Communion be received in the hand. While reception of Holy Communion on the tongue cannot be prohibited it is highly discouraged at this time.

Distribution of Holy Communion on the Tongue

- Out of pastoral necessity and urgency, those desiring to receive Holy Communion on the tongue may do so. In this instance, they are to be last in line and receive only from the priest. In the unfortunate circumstance that the priest's fingers come in contact with the mouth and/or saliva of the communicant the priest must immediately wash and sanitize his fingers before continuing with the next in line.

- Reception of the Precious Blood from the chalice by the assembly is temporarily suspended. Accommodation should be made for low-gluten hosts to be available for those with gluten intolerance.
- The location of stations for the distribution of Holy Communion should be considered to facilitate orderly movement and to maintain proper physical distance. One-way traffic patterns are encouraged.
- Appropriate spacing between individuals in the Communion Procession is to be maintained.
- Holy Communion is not to be distributed with gloves, nor may it be received in the hand with gloves.
- When approaching the minister, the communicant is to pull their mask (*if wearing one*) below their chin. The minister, after saying, "Body of Christ," is to carefully place (drop) the host into the hand of the communicant avoiding any incidental contact. Communicants, after responding "Amen," reverently place the Eucharist in their mouth and replace their mask.