



SAINT WILLIAM PARISH

5431 Mahoning Avenue NW
Warren, Ohio 44483
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September 2020

Dear Saint William Parishioner,

As we turn the page to September and begin school and many other activities, I hope this finds you and your family well, healthy, and safe. No doubt the past months have been unusual and different. While the current health crisis and situation has impacted all of us altering our daily lives, I hope this past summer season has provided you some relief and comfort to enjoy the outdoors and warm sunshine.

I am writing to update you on the current status of our parish with regard to weekend Mass and other activities/events. Although the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains, it is intended primarily for those of a vulnerable age or with compromised health concerns. It is vitally important that anyone who is sick or at high risk of becoming sick stay home during this time. Since returning to our normal weekend Mass schedule in early June, we continue to make every effort to maintain a safe and healthy environment. The wearing of face coverings, physical distancing, and cleaning/sanitizing procedures remain.

In an effort to return to a sense of normalcy, our parish is slowly reopening to activities and events. Organizations and groups have scheduled meetings and events with the hope of resuming in the coming weeks. In-person gatherings will follow current health guidelines as mandated by the State of Ohio and the Diocese. To further provide for a safe environment, the enclosed "Safe Environment In-Person/Building Protocols" will be required for all meetings/gatherings in the Church building in addition to normal cleaning and disinfection procedures. The safety and well-being of every person coming into the building for worship or other events remains our highest priority. Unfortunately, parish-wide events and activities of a larger scale will not happen at the present time.

As we prepare to reopen our parish, I would like to offer my sincerest and heartfelt thanks to all of you for your continued and on-going kindness, support, and generosity during this unprecedented time.

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Many have remained faithfully committed to their weekly financial support which has allowed us to meet all of our responsibilities. In the coming weeks I will provide our yearly financial report summarizing our position for the past year and looking forward. I am eternally grateful for your support and faithfulness in allowing our parish to remain vibrant and fiscally sound.

Perhaps one of the more challenging aspects of life right now is the uncertainty and ambiguity we are dealing with as we continue to maneuver through life. Simple things such as family gatherings, school activities, and social events have been met with hesitation, anxiety, and wonder. We know that fear of the unknown can be overwhelming and unnerving. While the need for caution and vigilance remains, the return to normalcy, routine, and interaction is also just as vital and important. Our challenge is how to accomplish both under these new and different circumstances. I would like to offer that our faith and Church might be a viable solution. Coming together each week as God's family, engaging in prayer and worship, and being with other parishioners in a safe and cautious environment can be good for the soul, mind, and heart. I would encourage you to consider your level of comfort in returning to Church and being a part of our vibrant parish. Together and by taking care of each other we can remain resilient and be a source of comfort and calm in the midst of these circumstances. I look forward to seeing you if you are feeling well and comfortable. Things are different these days but one thing that never changes is *the love God has for all of us and our need to gather as His people to give thanks for the blessings bestowed on us!*

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

St. William Church

Safe Environment In-Person/Building Protocols

All Parish Organizations/Groups holding meetings and activities in St. William Church Building are to follow these guidelines to help maintain a safe environment for all those in attendance.

In Person Protocols

1. Anyone who is not feeling well, symptomatic or has been in immediate contact or exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID is not to attend any gathering/meeting/event.
2. Anyone who has traveled:
 - a. To a state currently on the State of Ohio Travel Advisory list should quarantine 14 days upon returning before attending a parish gathering/meeting/event.
 - b. To a state not currently on the State of Ohio Travel Advisory list is asked to quarantine for 72 hours upon returning before attending a parish gathering/meeting/event.
3. All in attendance are to wear face-coverings.
4. All in attendance should maintain a proper physical distance (recommended 6 feet) at all times.
5. All in attendance are limited to the gathering/meeting/event room and restrooms. Access to other parts of the building should be avoided.
6. Attendees are asked to limit touching of surfaces.
7. Attendees are asked not to gather in the hallway.

Building Protocols

1. The organization chair/meeting moderator should determine the space to be used based on the number expected to attend. (ie. Classroom/Adult Meeting Room/Social Hall).
2. The organization chair/meeting moderator should determine the physical arrangement of the space maintaining proper physical distance.
3. Upon conclusion of the meeting, all chairs, tables, door handles, light switches etc., must be wiped down and sanitized. Materials provided by Church.
4. Kitchen:
 - a. A limited number of persons are to be in the kitchen at any given time.
 - b. Preparing of hot food should be minimal.

- c. The kitchen has been sanitized and so please limit use of utensils, items, surfaces, areas that are used and/or touched.
 - d. Upon conclusion of the gathering/event/meeting all used areas and surfaces are to be cleaned and sanitized.
 - e. The Parish Office and/or Maintenance person is to be notified of any issues or concerns beyond normal use and cleaning/sanitizing of the kitchen area.
5. Serving of Food:
- a. Meeting/Event hospitality should be limited.
 - b. Prepackaged hospitality is preferred.
 - c. Serving of food should be done either by:
 - i. Served by an individual (with face-covering), or
 - ii. All in attendance must use hand sanitizer and wear face covering before approaching the food serving line and maintain proper physical distance while in line.