

July 6, 2020

Dear St. Patrick's Parishioners,

As you may already know, Pike County guidelines now allow us to resume public Mass, which we did this past Sunday, 7/5/20 at 11am. It was not a return to normal nor will Mass be like it was previously for the foreseeable future. We will be following guidelines set forth by our Bishop, Joseph Bambera of the Diocese of Scranton.

Our gradual reopen began with only one Sunday Mass at 11am and may evolve into an additional weekend Mass if the attendance numbers dictate such a change. Mass will continue to be live streamed from our Facebook page as well as recorded and posted to our website, Facebook & Twitter pages. Keep in mind that your Sunday obligation to attend mass remains suspended until further notice.

Here are the four most important guidelines for attending Mass:

1. If you are not feeling well, have an underlying condition, or are unable to wear a mask, please do not attend. If you are elderly or in the "vulnerable" category we strongly encourage you to stay home. If you have children that cannot keep a mask on or that are not required to wear a mask (under the age of 2) please do not bring them inside the church. If you have been exposed to someone that has tested positive for COVID 19 in the last 14 days, please do not enter the church. You do not have to attend Mass if you in any way feel uncomfortable. Again, I remind you that the obligation to attend Mass is still suspended at this time.
2. Social Distancing: You must practice proper Social Distancing. Our Church floors and pews are marked with blue tape adhering to the 6' requirement.
3. Masks: For your safety and the safety of others upon entry to the Church and Hall you MUST wear a mask and keep it on at all times. If you do not have a mask, they will be available at the entrances.
4. Sanitizer: Please feel free to bring and use your own hand sanitizer. We will also provide hand sanitizer for your use as you enter and exit the Church and Hall. Please know that all areas of our Church will be fully sanitized before and after each Mass.

Procedures for Mass Attendance:

1. Reservations are NOT required any longer to attend Mass.
2. When you arrive for Mass you must enter through the front entrance as all other entrances will be locked. You will be directed by an usher to your pew. Families who live in the same household may sit together in the same pew.
3. There will be no offertory collection. We ask you to please place any offering in the collection baskets in the center aisle as you enter the Church or the Hall.
4. Communion will be distributed at the end of Mass. Please receive Communion in your hand. Those seated on the left side of the church will receive first, followed by the right side (choir side) after receiving you will continue to exit through the open door past the sacristy. If you are not receiving Communion please join the Communion line as if you are and exit the building when it is your turn. Please remember to continue to Social Distance during Communion by following the blue markings. Lastly, we ask that you not congregate outside and continue to maintain proper social distancing.
5. The mass will also be live streamed to the Church Hall, which can seat an additional 50 socially distanced individuals. A deacon or extraordinary minister of the Eucharist will bring communion to those seated in the Church Hall. An usher will be available to assist you so please follow the instructions for social distancing and exit the building immediately after receiving communion.

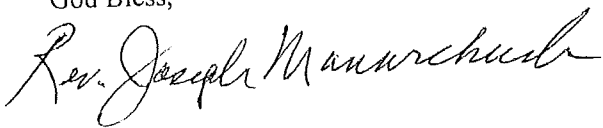
6. If we fill both buildings, or if you do not yet feel comfortable gathering inside, you can still hear the mass by parking in a designated area either in front of the Church or in the Hall parking lot where you will be able to listen to Mass on outside speakers. If you decide to remain in your car you can also follow the Mass livestreamed from our Facebook page on your smart device. Those who opt to stay in their cars will be able to receive Holy Communion at the end of Mass by driving under the carport next to the Church Hall and exit your vehicle when directed by an usher.

Please follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and our website to obtain the most updated Mass times and information or call the office at 570-296-7451. Beginning the weekend of July 18 & 19th we will go back to our regular summer Mass schedule, 5:30pm on Saturday night, and 7:15am and 11:00am on Sundays. We will continue to offer weekday Mass on Tuesday and Wednesday at St. Patrick's at noon. Reservations are no longer required to attend those services either.

We understand that these are very trying times and we all want to get back to worshipping together. For now, this will be the "new normal". The most important thing is the health and safety of all of us.

Thank you for your understanding and patience with the cautious reopening process at our Bishop's insistence and for your continued financial support throughout the pandemic.

God Bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Joseph Manarchuck". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr. Joseph Manarchuck