

Thursday June 11, 2020

Greetings to all parishioners and friends of St. Francis de Sales.

We have good news to share. Next weekend we will be able to celebrate the Eucharist and receive Communion (the Real Presence of Christ)! The Province is allowing churches to open with 30 % capacity at each Mass. At St. Francis we are preparing for 2 Masses on the weekend of June 20 -21. With the need to sanitize between Masses, we will begin with 5 PM on Saturday June 20 and 9:30 AM on Sunday June 21. For the time being there will be no 11 AM Mass.

Please know that the Archbishop has extended the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass for those who are unable to attend at this time. Consequently we will continue to live-stream the 9:30 Mass.

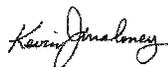
With safe practices in place we can only have 53-103 people at Mass, depending on how many come from one household. Unfortunately, this means that you cannot attend the usual Mass of your choice. The parish council has met to plan how to select who can attend Mass each week. We will begin by contacting those with emails on file, filling up the limit of the 5 PM Mass and then moving on to fill the attendance at 9:30. We ask for your patience and trust as we try to safely, fairly, and eagerly get all of you back into the church as soon as possible.

Opening up will be a bit of a struggle since we are a warm and loving parish where people enjoy being close and mingling. Sadly, we cannot do that at this time. We will have to remember social distancing in the parking lot, while entering the church and especially once you are inside. We will also have to follow different protocols for seating inside. To make sure all goes smoothly, we are asking that you:

- remain home if you do not feel well or have ANY symptom of the COVID-19 virus.
- arrive no earlier than 30 minutes before Mass starts.
- consider wearing a mask to protect others from potential contact with the virus.
- sanitize your hands on entering.
- follow the usher seating you to ensure physical distancing is observed.
- follow the protocol of seating from the front (altar) to back of the church
- follow the ushers' directions to exit slowly with safe distancing
- allow a volunteer to hold the door open for you on the way out

Unfortunately, at present there can be no Holy Water, song books, Sunday Missals or votive candles in the church, and only the musicians are allowed to sing at this time. Similarly there is no offertory procession so please put your envelopes or donations in the boxes at the entrances to the church.

As we begin returning to the parish for Mass, please remember that our goal is to have you all here again as soon as possible, sharing the blessings of parish life. Let us pray for each other to have patience as we go along.



Father Kevin Maloney and the Parish Council