

306 North Washington St.
Jerseyville, IL 62052

St. Mary's Church

Phone: 618-498-3416
hgchurch@gtec.com

Dear St. Mary's Parishioners,

June 7th, 2020

As you may or may not know, Bishop Thomas John Paprocki has given us permission to resume public Masses. Here at St. Mary's we will resume with public Masses starting with a **6 PM Mass** on Saturday, June 13th. Take note that this is a new Mass that will be offered until further notice in addition to the 9:30 AM Sunday Mass, this 6 PM Mass will be temporary until we can resume our regular Mass schedule. The Sunday 9:30 AM Mass will begin on Sunday, June 14th. We are far from being back to "the way it was," so please pay attention to the following special policies and precautions that the Diocese of Springfield has enacted for the safety of all in our parish family. Also, please note that Bishop Paprocki's dispensation from the obligation to attend Holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation remains in effect for an indefinite period, until further notice. Use your best judgment about whether or not to come to church.

It is very important for you to let us know if you are coming to Weekend Mass by Calling the Parish Office (618-498-3416) or signing up at the link on the parish website (<https://jerseycatholicchurches.org/churches/st-marys/>) or Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/hgcatholicchurch/>)

Only 40 total people will be allowed in the church per Mass time so scheduling your appointment beforehand is imperative for our success.

As we take this step together, there are a few important things to know:

1. **Mass attendance is Optional, not Obligatory:** The Coronavirus continues to be a serious health matter, especially for the elderly, those with underlying health conditions, and those with compromised immune systems. Therefore, as we begin this journey back to the proper life of the Church in our diocese, the dispensation from the obligation to attend Holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation remains in effect until further notice. Those who are not well must remain at home and those who believe they are at risk of infection should exercise prudence. Anyone with a 100.4 degree or above temperature and/or a cough should not attend Mass until cleared by a doctor. Masses will continue to be live streamed daily Monday – Friday at 8:30 AM and on Sundays at 8:00 AM. The 4 PM Vigil Mass and the Sunday 11:15 Mass will not be live streamed, but the live streamed Masses will be recorded and available for viewing at anytime on the parish website, Facebook page and YouTube page noted above.
2. **Safe-Distancing, Attendance Limits, and Other Precautions:** Consistent with government guidelines, the diocese is setting a 25% maximum occupancy for worship spaces in public liturgies. **(For St. Mary's this will be 40 parishioners per Mass.)** Further, the diocese has formulated specific guidelines for the safe return to public Masses and sacramental life, derived primarily from the Thomistic Institute, which were shared by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Thomistic Institute guidelines were prepared by a team of national experts, including both liturgical expertise as well as infectious disease, medicine, and

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public health expertise. They are the most comprehensive and well-researched guidelines available. These guidelines articulate detailed procedures for ensuring safe distancing and sanitary safety while preserving the integrity and dignity of the sacraments.

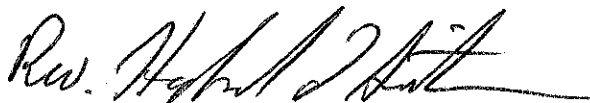
3. **Training and Support for Pastors, Staff, and Volunteers:** Diocesan staff have prepared web-based training for pastors and their teams to help them understand, interpret, and apply the Thomistic Institute's standards for the safe reintroduction of public Mass and the sacraments. This training is available for replay at: <https://www.dio.org/parishreopeningplan>
4. **Volunteers are needed for both Ushers and Cleaners at all Masses. Contact the office to volunteer. *If we don't have enough volunteers the diocese will not allow us to have Masses.***
5. You will find the holy water fonts are empty and that there is hand sanitizer available. Hymnals and Pray Together have been removed from the pews, and there will not be any singing.
6. You will notice there will be no sign of peace, and no passing of the collection basket.
7. The distribution of Holy Communion will take place immediately after Mass allowing for the ministers to wear a mask for the safety of our community.
8. You can drop your donation the secure lockbox provided at the church entrance or sign up for Egiving on the parish webpage.

The full details of the diocesan standards for safe public liturgies is posted on the <https://www.dio.org/parishreopeningplan> website.

This milestone is just one step toward returning to the proper life of the Church, and many modifications, constraints, and precautions will be used to limit any potential resurgence of infection in our communities. We must remain vigilant and cautious of our physical health and that of our neighbor, even as we return to the proper care of our spiritual health.

With prayerful good wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Hyland Smith

Pastor St. Mary's Church