



Fr. Matthew's Message:

Guidelines for "Phase 1" of Reopening

And now some good news – and some bad news. . .

The good news is that starting next weekend: May 16 & 17 – we will be able to celebrate Mass publicly once again.

The bad news is that these public celebrations come with many restrictions both from the Mayor's Office as well as the Bishop's Office. Both are acting with the best of intentions to insure our health – and the health of our community.

After consultation with the Bishops throughout Missouri – Bishop Johnston issues the following directives for all of us to follow during what is being called "Phase One" of our return.

First and foremost, the four Bishops of Missouri have dispensed the faithful from the OBLIGATION to attend Mass on Sunday --- so for those of you who still think you are going to hell for missing Mass – you aren't.

So --- if you are over the age of 60 or have an underlying health issue, regardless of your age --- please stay home! We will continue to provide the Sunday Mass on our website for the foreseeable future.

Because of the need for sanitizing all surfaces of the pews, and doors, and restrooms, and everything else that might be touched ---- we will ONLY be having 2 Masses a weekend – one on Saturday at 4:00 o'clock. Because we are unsure of how long the sanitizing will take – we don't want the crunch of having to do that between Masses on a Sunday morning.

We are limited to 50 people, who must keep six feet apart, at each Mass.

SO:

--If you are not willing to wear a Mask for the protection of others, as required at the Bishop's request – please stay at home.

--If you are not willing to receive Communion in the hand, which the US Bishop's Conference has determined in the safest way to distribute Communion – please stay at home.

--If you have young children under the age of five – please leave them at home -- as recommended by public health officials.

-If you are not feeling well – or have a fever – please stay at home.

--If you are unwilling to be seated in a specific place within the Church – and remain in that seat, which will allow us to observe the 6 foot social distancing rule as required by public health officials --- please stay home.

--Also, at the end of Mass, if you are unwilling to remain in your seat to be dismissed in an orderly manner, again in observance of the 6-foot social distancing rule – please stay home.

Now, if you have not been totally scared off – which quite frankly – I would be ---- how do you know if you are one of those 50 people who can come to Mass???

Quite honestly, we are still working on that. . . sometime soon, you will be receiving an on-line survey --- simply asking if you are willing to abide by all the restrictions placed upon our public gathering by the Mayor and Bishop Johnston.

If you are willing – you will also be asked which Mass – Saturday or Sunday – you would like to come to Mass.

Then between now and next weekend – you will be notified which Mass you will be able to attend.

Now remember, only 50 people can come to each of two Masses – so most likely – not everyone will be able to be accommodated. . .

So the next weekend – those who were not able to attend will be invited to join us FIRST – and every week, you will be notified in some way – which Mass you can attend.

This is a lot to take in – and process – and understand – so it can all be found on our website.

If it were up to me – I would have recommended not even thinking about returning to Mass until July 1st – it would have been easier for us all --- but that was not up to me.

Please be patient with us – as this is new territory for us all – if it seems like we are thinking and doing things at the last minute – we are --- we can only deal with the information as it comes to us ---- and as you probably know from watching the news – or policies in your workplace – sometimes things change every day.

Again, we are in uncharted waters – please know we are doing the best we can – again the bottom line being our health –and the health of our community.

We will get through this. One day there will be both good news and good news – and we will all be together again.

In the meantime, let's continue praying for each other – praying for our church and government officials who have a lot on their plate right now ---- pray for our Church – that we will be all the more stronger after this. And pray for our country – as far as I know, still the greatest place in the world to live.

God bless you all – remain strong and healthy. Continue to love one another and to know that we are all in this together.