

Looking to the Next Sundays

Dear St. Patrick Parishioners—

With Mother's Day and also another Sunday of Easter, **we'll have our 9:00 a.m. "streamed" Mass tomorrow.** At the end of the Mass, we'll have the church's **special blessing for all Mothers** from the church's Book of Blessings.

We'll hear in the Scriptures tomorrow that we're **"living stones" being built up into a "spiritual house."** We're far more than simply a building at the corner of MLK Boulevard and S. 4th Street. We as "living stones" need to be fitted together and serving together in the coming Sundays as we begin to return to our church building.

Last Saturday I sent you the Decree from Bishop David, announcing that **public Masses may resume on Sunday, May 17th.** Let me--hopefully clearly--go over the next steps:

- **For all the next Sundays, we'll continue having our "streamed Sunday Masses,"** just as we have these previous six Sundays. For safety reasons, you may decide to participate in Mass through these "streamed" Masses. Bishop David has dispensed everyone from the obligation to come to Mass in the church through June 30th, 2020. The Bishop points this out, and I recommend, that if you are over 65, or if your health is weakened, please consider avoiding to return to Mass at this time.
- As the Bishop stressed repeatedly, and as you expect, **assuring the safety of all parishioners with "social distancing of 6 feet" is a critical part of these Masses.**
- **Starting next Sunday, May 17th, we'll have three Masses--8:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., and 5:15 p.m.**

Following the Bishop's directives, and very much believing in them, we ask for your help in being patient and understanding with the new process for participating in Mass at the church. It is not a perfect process, but it is one that the Parish Pastoral Council, the Parish Finance Council, and the staff have worked hard to create.

- Because of the necessary "social distancing of 6 feet," **we'll have limited seating at each Sunday Mass.** We'll be able to have only about **55 persons** at each Sunday Mass. **Tomorrow I'll give you the information on how to make reservations for the next Sunday's Masses on May 17th.** If you have not made a reservation, you will not be allowed in the church. In addition, no one will be admitted to the church once the Mass has begun.
- We strongly urge you to arrive **at least 20-30 minutes prior to the start of Mass.** Your **temperature** will be taken. We'll check if you've made a **reservation.** You will have to **wear a face mask at all times,** except when you receive Communion. And, just before you enter, **you will have your hands sanitized.**
- If we learn from the reservations of an "overflow," then you will be directed to the St. Patrick Outreach Center, where the "streamed" Mass will be shown on a big screen. Holy Communion will also be brought to you.
- Another idea: **Starting on Tuesday, May 19th, you can come to any of the 5:15 p.m. weekday Masses in the church on each Tuesday through Friday.** There will be fewer people. Of course, at all times you will keep faithful to social distancing and wearing a mask.

Finally, **we need volunteers!** Yes, we have a great need of parishioners who will help make our time at church safe. Very shortly, we'll send out how you can sign up online.

As "living stones," St. Patrick's, let's show that we're a "spiritual house"--vibrant in our faith and in service, and far more than a building of mortar!

Father Val