

St John Paul II Parish

St Adalbert + St George + Mother of Divine Grace + Nativity BVM
Port Richmond, Philadelphia

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June 4, 2020

Dear Friends,

We hope that this letter finds you well even after so many difficult and distressing days and months. It's for you to finally receive some good news, in fact, great news!!

Archbishop Pérez has announced that the parishes of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia will be able to **resume public Masses this weekend** (June 6 and 7). We at St John Paul II Parish in Port Richmond look forward to welcoming you back! Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus as we make our way back to the in-person celebration of the Mass.

While Philadelphia remains in the "Yellow Phase" of reopening, all of us need to do our part to make sure that our return to Mass is a peaceful and safe experience. Please take the time to read the instructions below. We ask everyone to follow these guidelines when attending Mass during this period:

GENERAL POINTS

- o You are not required to attend Mass at this time. The dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation continues during the Yellow Phase.
- o Please stay home if you are sick.
- o Please stay home if you are at a higher risk of severe illness with COVID19. If you are uncertain about your risk status, please consult your doctor and also the CDC Guidelines at the link below.
 - o Click here to read the CDC Guidelines for those at higher risk:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>
- o Mass will continue to be available online and via live-stream.
 - o We will have Mass live on Facebook at 7:30 PM on Saturdays in English and this Mass will be available on both Facebook, Youtube, and our parish website all weekend.
 - o Mass will also be celebrated in Polish and streamed live on our parish website on Sundays at 10:30 AM.

MASS SCHEDULE - We will have one Mass in each of our four parish Churches.

- o Vigil Mass - 4:00 PM at Mother of Divine Grace
- o Sunday 8:30 AM at St. George Church
- o Sunday 10:00 AM at Nativity BVM Church
- o Sunday 10:30 AM at St. Adalbert Church (in Polish)

BEFORE COMING TO MASS

- o Please wash your hands for 20 seconds using soap and water.
- o Before entering the Church, please put on a face mask or cloth covering. Exceptions to this are “children younger than 2 years old, anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, and anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face-covering without assistance” (CDC Guidelines).
- o Since we will not be able to use missalettes during the yellow phase, please consider downloading the app “ibreviary” onto your phone and tablet. It’s free and has all the readings and prayers for the day! You are also welcome to bring your own missal/readings with you.

ENTERING THE CHURCH

- o We will be using the regular entrances and exits but the doors will be propped open so that you may enter without touching the door handles.
- o Hand sanitizers will be available at the Church entrances. Please use the hand sanitizer upon entering and exiting the Church.
- o Please bring your own hand sanitizer if you have it!

SEATING

- o When taking your seat, please honor all posted signs about where you may sit. We will be using every third pew to ensure proper social distancing.
- o The pews that are open for seating will be marked with a Blue Cross. There will also be crosses in the aisles to make it easier to keep social distance.
- o The general rule is, "if you live together you can sit together." Please try to maintain 6 feet of distance between your household and members of a different household.

DURING MASS

- o There will not be an entrance or recessional procession from the back of the Church.
- o Instead, the priests and other ministers will go to the altar directly from the sacristy.
- o There will be singing but the hymns will be shorter than normal.
- o We will not be able to have the offertory procession for the time being.
- o When we get to the Sign of Peace, we will bow or wave to our neighbors rather than shaking hands.
- o For Communion, we will distribute the Body of Christ but we will not be able to share the Blood of Christ.

RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

- o During the Lamb of God, please use hand sanitizer once more to prepare for receiving Communion.
- o For the reception of Holy Communion, we will form a single file line in the center aisle using the blue crosses on the floor to help us to maintain social distance.

- o Please wear your mask as you come up to receive Communion. When the Body of Christ is placed in your hands, you should take two or three steps to the side, lower your mask, and receive Jesus. Then, replace your mask and return to your pew.
- o During the Yellow Phase, the faithful are asked to receive Holy Communion in the hand.

EXITING THE CHURCH

- o At the conclusion of Mass, please exit the Church beginning with the pews that are nearest the doors and careful to continue to maintain social distance.
- o Please take a parish bulletin home with you as you leave.
- o As tempting as it will be, please don't congregate in the back of the church or on the sidewalk after Mass. We know this is a sacrifice but it is important so that we can protect one another for now.
- o Please leave your mask on as you exit the Church.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

St. John Paul II Parish will follow the guidelines from the CDC for sanitation as we resume public Masses.

- o To view the CDC guidelines, visit:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/faith-based.html>

After every Mass, volunteers will wipe all of the "high touch" areas of the church with a disinfecting solution, including the pews, door handles, railings, and bathrooms. We are looking for volunteers who can help with this cleaning. All of the supplies will be provided for you and as you know, "many hands make light work."

While all of these safeguards may feel a bit overwhelming or even unnerving, we will do everything we can to make sure that Mass in our parish is as reverent, welcoming, and peaceful as possible. We will be safe, but we will also be able to worship our God and receive his Son, Jesus Christ, in the Eucharist. That, for us, is everything!

Welcome back and God bless you!

Fr. Olson
Fr. Gorman
Fr. Jan
Deacon Ralph