

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I want to reach out with this letter to speak to the plans at the parishes regarding the continued reopening of the churches during Stage 5 of reopen Indiana. This is also in response to the growing number of folk who are returning to church **which is awesome!!** But we still want to create a safe environment in our worship space. Therefore, please read the following points of our plan in full:

1. Adoration is now available from 9am-9pm every day. On Wednesdays from 5:30-6:30, the monstrance will be taken to the church for adoration while confessions are being heard. Benediction will be at 6:30 followed by a procession back to the Adoration Chapel.
2. As of now, the Archbishop's dispensation allowing Catholics to miss Sunday Mass will end on November 1. We do **NOT** know if this will be extended, so preparations are being made to welcome Catholics back to Mass after that date.
  - a. **TO BE CLEAR**; if you are sick or have an underlying health risk, you will not be required to return to Mass when the dispensation comes to an end.
3. Thankfully, the 4pm Saturday Mass at St. Margaret Mary and the 9am Sunday Mass at St. Patrick are becoming quite full as we continue practicing social distancing. **Yay us!!**
4. This means that if you are planning on coming back in the upcoming weeks, **we would highly recommend attending the 6pm Saturday Mass at St. Patrick or the 11am Sunday Mass at St. Margaret Mary.** These are not as full at this time and can accommodate more parishioners while still following social distancing.
5. **YOU MUST WEAR MASKS!** This is in accordance with the Governor's executive order, the Archbishop's directive, and is considered a Christian act of loving thy neighbor as those 65 and older are allowed to be at Mass (and have been for a while). Masks will be provided at the doors for those who do not have one. This is not a recommendation, but a **requirement**.

In the upcoming weeks, the following measures will be taken to help accommodate the growing number of faithful returning to Mass. We will let you know when these are implemented as they occur.

1. In order to allow more people to safely share in Sunday worship, we are looking to have overflow in adjacent buildings where a live-streaming of the Mass will be available.
  - a. For St. Patrick, this overflow will be in the gym for the 9am Sunday Mass
  - b. For St. Margaret Mary, this overflow will be in the Legacy Hall for the 4pm Mass.
  - c. Additional Masses may be granted overflow as needed.
2. Additional Eucharistic Ministers will be used to distribute communion. Stay tuned as we figure out how best to implement this while limiting the possibility of exposure. This will also include having a Eucharistic Minister take communion to those in the overflow areas.
3. Eventually, we would like to see more pews open up and the ropes removed. But we will do this in stages, **constantly being diligent as to the case numbers in our community and the recommendations from our local health officials.**

Obviously, a lot is still in flux, and these plans are subject to change. But I just wanted to let you know what we're hoping for in the short term. Please know of my continued prayers during these difficult times, and feel free to contact me with any questions, thoughts, or concerns. May God bless you and your families.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fr. Daniel Bedel".

Fr. Dan Bedel