

Dear St. Mary Parishioners,

As many already know, Bishop Paprocki has given permission for the public celebration of Masses in our diocese. This certainly is welcome news to say the least! We will be able to gather in the presence of one another to be nourished in the Eucharistic sacrifice, the source and summit of the Christian life. Rather appropriately, we here at St. Mary's will begin such on the weekend of June 13/14 – the Solemnity of the Holy Body and Blood of Christ (*Corpus Christi*).

Beginning the weekend of June 13/14 we will resume our regular Sunday schedule of Masses: the 5:00 p.m. vigil Mass on Saturday as well as the regular 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Masses. In addition, we will resume our regular weekday Masses beginning Tuesday, June 16 (Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. and Wednesday, Thursday and Friday at 8:00 a.m.)

We are allowed to resume public worship with up to 25% of the seating capacity of one's church. For us at St. Mary's this would be approximately 100 persons. This is due, of course, to the current pandemic we are living through. As always, we need to be attentive to the health and safety of those who are participating in Mass. This being the case, those who wish to attend a Sunday (weekend) Mass need to sign-up for such. This can be done through our parish Sign-Up Genius on our parish website ([stmaryedw.org](http://stmaryedw.org)) or on our parish and school Facebook pages. If one is not able to sign-up through these means, one can call our parish office (618-656-4857) and give the names of those wishing to attend. One can also send such information to our parish office email address ([office@stmaryedw.org](mailto:office@stmaryedw.org)) PLEASE – do not simply show up at Sunday Mass. This is not only a courtesy; it helps with planning. To those attending, please try to come to Mass a bit earlier than usual. Ushers will help you with seating. Due to fewer people who customarily attend weekday Masses, there will not be the need to sign-up for such.

We will continue for the time being the Distribution of Holy Communion outside of Mass as we have been doing these past few weeks. Persons may not be able to attend Mass or perhaps may not feel comfortable at this time going into places where there are somewhat larger groups of persons. This is understandable. Beginning the weekend of June 13/14 the distribution of Holy Communion will take place after the Sunday (weekend) Masses: Saturdays 5:45 p.m. to 6:15 p.m., Sundays 8:45 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. The distribution will

take place outside the doors of the south entrance into the school. Prior to receiving Holy Communion, as usual, please have viewed the celebration of Mass on our parish website (stmaryedw.org), our parish or school Facebook pages or another source and have prepared oneself spiritually to receive the Blessed Sacrament.

When attending Mass, please bring a face mask and wear such going into the church and upon leaving the church. Face masks do not need to be worn in the church itself during Mass as there will be the usual observance of social distancing in the pews, etc. One may of course wear a mask at all or any times.

Bishop Paprocki decreed the reopening of churches in our diocese for public Masses on Thursday, May 28. You may want to visit the link on our diocesan website for very informative and detailed information concerning reopening (<https://www.dio.org/parishreopeningplan>).

Finally, Bishop Paprocki's dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days remain in effect.

As someone said to me recently, it is far easier to close a church than to reopen it. Especially at a time like this, how true! This is still new for all of us. We are in a sense feeling our way around as to what to do. Patience, charity and a dose of humor help. Let us keep one another in prayer as the community of faith that is St. Mary's.

Peace in Christ,

*-Fr. Bob*