Coming Back to a more fully open church.

New Norms authorized by Bishop Bares (5/5/2021)

The **dispensation** from the obligation to attend Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation Masses remains in effect. However, you in-person participation in the Holy Mass and Sacraments is encouraged and is fairly safe in our church with the precautions we set up.

Beginning May 19, 2021, 100% of our church's capacity may be occupied. However, some social distancing should remain in place as best as possible; so, be reasonable, wear masks and maintain ***some distance***. Six feet is not a "magic number" for protection, and we do not need to be exact. Tape can be removed completely while the above points are observed.

Masks should be worn, except by children under 2 years of age and those individuals with breathing difficulties. Priest celebrants do not wear masks during the celebration of Holy Mass.

Lector's, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Altar Servers, Sacristans, etc., may return. All safety protocols regarding masks and hand sanitizing should be maintained. It is up to the pastor's discretion to adapt the procedures of all assistants as he judges necessary. Choirs may resume at the pastor's discretion as well.

Entrance Processions may resume. **Offertory processions <u>should not</u>** resume because of the added complications of handling the gifts, interaction with ushers, etc.

Collection baskets with attached poles can be used.

The **Sign of Peace** <u>may</u> continue; however, it should not involve physical contact outside of one's own household.

The **Precious Blood** should not be distributed until further notice. Concelebrants should receive the Precious Blood by intinction.

The faithful must **consume the Host immediately**, and not carry it back to their seats. The risk of transmission of the virus through surface contact is very low. Parishes should continue to clean bathrooms and frequently touched surfaces such as door handles. However, it is not necessary to "disinfect" churches in between liturgies.

Holy Water fonts should remain empty indefinitely, but Holy Water is be available to the faithful in our Holy Water Font.

Outdoor Masses should not be the norm. In addition, Holy Communion distribution protocols must be strictly observed. Communion should not be brought to cars.

Weddings, Funerals, Confessions, Anointing of the Sick, Eucharistic Adoration and devotions, etc., should continue as normal with the same cautions outlined above.

Our Parish Offices and Outreach and Religious Formation **have always been open** and functioning throughout the pandemic.

Parish activities can resume as well with procedures left to the discretion of the pastor. Other meetings / organizations (i.e. addiction support) may also resume with the same expectations regarding masks, reasonable distancing, reasonable cleaning, etc.

The children (and adults) of our communities have been adversely affected by the social isolation of the past year. Wherever possible, pastors are encouraged to resume in-person Religious Education classes; we have been doing so for a long time already here.

This is what we will be doing starting on Pentecost Weekend. My guess is that approximately 400 people can fit in church safely. We are still going to use the one entrance.
Thank you.

Fr. Larry