



Blessed Savior Catholic Church
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May 3, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

I hope you are doing well and doing your best to cope with the current situation. The last couple of months have been most challenging for everyone as we strive to cope with life. The Corona virus pandemic created a crisis we never saw coming. Some of you are sick of staying home alone. Others are sick of being with the same people day-in day-out. We are sick of being dislodged from our normal rhythm of life. We are sick of the tragic deaths and near-death experiences associated with this pandemic, not to talk of the economic impact. There are numerous cases of pandemic-induced anxieties that reflect negatively on people we encounter. Nonetheless, we look to the future with hope and faith. We also count our blessings and strive to keep it together knowing full well it could be worse.

For us Catholics, one of the most impactful deprivation of the Covid-19 crisis is the inability to gather as a community to celebrate the sacraments. We are a Sacramental Church and our lives revolve around the sacraments, especially the Holy Eucharist. As Archbishop ListECKI said in his latest letter, "without the Eucharist we feel truly lost and empty." This lockdown has given us time to reflect and come to greater appreciation of the gift we have as Church. It has created a deep longing for the Eucharist and other sacraments we often take for granted.

Following Governor Ever's declaration of "Badger Bounce Back," Archbishop ListECKI has declared "Catholic Comeback" as part of the effort to regain our lives following the gradual easing of the pandemic. This is not going to be like flipping a switch and suddenly everything returns to normal. It is going to be a gradual process. According to the Archbishop, the re-opening must be done in a reasonable and responsible way. As with the Archdiocesan Synod in 2014, he wants our gradual re-opening to feel like a New Pentecost.

The Archbishop will like us to begin our gradual return to the celebration of Mass on Pentecost Sunday, May 31st. This includes the Mass of anticipation on Saturday, May 30th. He will let us know if circumstances warrant consideration of an earlier date.

In a phone call with priests, parish directors, and other related leaders in the Archdiocese, the Archbishop made the following points:

- The importance of striking a balance between our desire to go to Mass, the safety of our people, and the safety of priests.
- The pastor will determine whether the parish is ready and prepared to re-open. Logistics matter, and things need to be thought through about having the right supplies, etc.
- Social distancing must be maintained at Mass.

- There should be a maximum of three Masses per day.
- People 65 years and older who have compromised immune systems or have underlying health problems should seriously consider staying home.
- **Daily Masses will remain on hold for now.**
- Only priests will distribute communion, wearing face masks.
- Celebration of 1st Communion will be left to the pastor's imagination on how best to do it.
- Communion is not to be treated as a lucky charm. There will be no distribution of Communion outside of Mass except as Viaticum. Communion should not be taken to non-sick people at home.
- Communion will only be received in the form of bread, including First Communion.
- Collections should be left for three days before counting.
- At the end of Mass, ushers would usher people out in compliance with social distancing.
- For funerals and weddings, there must be ten people or less.
- Confessions could be heard but without the use of confessionals.
- There will be a designated day in the Archdiocese for the celebration of RCIA sacraments.
- Pastors could request delegation to celebrate confirmation at the parish.

As we look forward to re-opening, let us do our best to cope with the current situation. We should continue to look out for one another. I remain grateful to all of you who have shown a great deal of magnanimity in your generous support of our parish finances through your contributions. I also encourage those who have not been supportive to consider joining the effort to keep our parish afloat during this difficult and challenging time.

Be assured of my prayers for you and your family as we strive to overcome this crisis.

Stay safe and God bless,

Rev. Romanus N. Nwaru
Pastor