



June 5, 2020

A note from the Pastor:

I just want to tell you how delighted Fr. Ron and I are that we were able to see you again! The words of the psalmist are as meaningful as ever: “Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell in unity.” Note: not just Zoom in Unity! (Psalm 133:1) While things seem to have gone rather smoothly for our first Sunday back, I want to thank you for the patience and charity you have demonstrated given all the changes we have had to enact.

Permit me to acknowledge a few important points as we go forward:

1. The first is to say that we are following the guidance of our bishop in taking efforts to ensure people’s safety as we begin to return to some form of normalcy. Concretely, this means how we enter (through the Park Street/ramp entrance) and leave Mass (out the main front doors, except for those needing the ramp); and the spacing we maintain within the church itself and at the reception of Communion, etc.
2. The wearing of masks at Mass. This has turned into one of the most contentious issues related to this crisis (not so much here in our parish, but nationally), and I want to acknowledge both that there are differing opinions on the need for masks and their benefits, etc. It is not the place of a pastor to enter into those debates or let them divide a congregation. I want to say I understand those who, for various reasons related to their own vulnerabilities, do not yet feel comfortable around people who are not wearing masks. We have two specific Masses where all attendees are required to wear masks; Saturday, 4:30pm (Ordinary Form Mass) and Sunday, 9:30am – (Extraordinary Form Mass). For the remaining Masses, per the directive of the bishop, we ask you to wear a mask, but will not question you on why you might not be wearing one.

Let me also remind you that all of this is temporary. I do not know how temporary or when we will be permitted to return to a more accustomed procedure. For the time being it is sufficient to say that I think we will be able to eliminate the need to sign up for Mass by the end of the month because by then we will have a good idea of who is coming at each Mass and their number.

We can also remove the cumbersome and confusing signs on the pews and simply depend on your own sense of prudence in spacing you and your family at a distance from other individuals and families, and in sanitizing your space upon departure.

Once again, I acknowledge how annoying some of this is, but out of “an abundance of caution” (the most popular new phrase of 2020, along with ‘social distancing’) and in obedience to the authorities

above us (I refer here to the bishop, not the Governess), we will keep things going this way and change things as soon as we can.

We have lots of things planned for our parish in the coming weeks and months, so stay tuned to our various communication outlets (FaceBook, website, gossip, etc.) for updates. I want to take this moment once again to thank you for your commitment to the life of our community. I wish also to commend our incredible staff and faculty who, despite disruptions, work at home orders, and in some cases furloughs and reduced salaries, have enabled us to move forward without missing a beat.

What an honor to be your pastor! Pray for me and Father Ron.

In Christ and under the protection of the Sacred Heart,  
Fr. Robert Sirico,  
Pastor