

# St. Basil The Great



## Resumption of Public Masses

In June 2020, Archbishop Pérez announced that the public celebration of Masses could resume in the Archdiocese with certain restrictions. We resumed public weekend Masses beginning with the Saturday, June 13, 2020 5:00 pm Mass and the Sunday, June 14, 2020 8:30 am Mass and planned to slowly resume a full weekend and daily Mass schedule over time. Daily public Masses resumed on July 6, 2020 and the Sunday 11:00 am Mass will resume on October 18, 2020.

We ask everyone to please read this document carefully and thank you in advance for your compliance with these guidelines should you decide to attend a public Mass. These guidelines will be in place for the foreseeable future. We will continue to update you should they change. To protect everyone attending, anyone who fails to comply with these guidelines will be asked to leave the premises.

## Who Should/Should Not Attend Mass

Please note that COVID-19 is a highly communicative airborne virus that spreads quickly. There is much about the virus that is still unknown. There currently is no way to ensure that anyone interacting/congregating with others in public spaces will not catch the virus. While we are taking efforts to follow applicable laws and public health guidelines, we cannot guarantee that anyone attending Mass will not catch the virus.

Because of the continued danger presented by COVID-19, Archbishop Pérez's suspension of the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation until further notice continues. No one, therefore, is obligated to attend Mass. If you are not comfortable attending Mass yet, please know that it is ok to stay home.

- If you are at all sick or if you have been exposed to anyone who is sick, has COVID-19, or is suspected of having COVID-19, please stay home. Should you be diagnosed with or be suspected of having COVID-19 after attending Mass, please let Fr. Gary know as soon as possible so we may take steps to protect others. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible/required.
- Please stay home if you:
  - are an "older adult"<sup>1</sup>;
  - are an "at risk" individual (e.g. someone who has underlying medical condition(s)<sup>2</sup> at any age or lives in a nursing home or long-term care facility); or
  - take care of or live with an "at risk" individual.

---

<sup>1</sup> According to the CDC, among adults, the risk for severe illness, hospitalization, and death increases with age, with older adults at highest risk. **In fact, 8 out of 10 COVID-19 related deaths reported in the U.S. have been among adults aged 65 or older.**

<sup>2</sup>Such medical conditions include, but are not limited to – cancer, chronic kidney disease, COPD, heart conditions such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies, immunocompromised state, obesity, sickle cell disease, smoking, and type 2 diabetes mellitus.

These are based on current CDC guidelines and are subject to change. If you are not sure if you are “at risk” and should stay home, please consult your doctor and/or current CDC and public health guidelines for more information.

To protect yourself, fellow worshippers, and our community at large, please err on the side of caution and stay home if you meet one of the categories listed above.

## Mass Schedule

- Masses will be open to the public in the Church on Saturdays at 5:00 pm, Sundays at 8:30 am and 11:00 am, and weekdays (Monday through Friday) at 8:45 am.
- Masses will continue to be live-streamed via our parish Facebook page weekdays at 8:45 am and Sundays at 8:30 am.

## Limited Seating Available

- Please note that for public health reasons, we are required to limit the number of worshippers in the Church to a percentage of our occupancy limit, while continuously implementing social distancing throughout your entire time on our premises.
- This will result in a very limited number of people being allowed to attend each public Mass. Many factors go into determining how many people will be allowed to attend each Mass, so the number may vary from week to week.
- If more people show up for Mass than can be safely seated in the Church, worshippers will be admitted on a first come, first served basis and those who cannot be seated will be asked to return home to participate via live-stream.

## Before Mass

- Sanitize your hands in accordance with current CDC and other guidelines prior to coming to Mass.
- There will be no hymnals in the pews. Should you wish to have copies of the readings, we encourage you to please print off your own copies of the readings prior to coming to Mass. Readings may be obtained on the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops website <http://www.usccb.org/>.
- You must have a face mask on in our parking lot and prior to entering the Church. The only current exceptions to this are described in the *Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Requiring Universal Face Coverings*, issued and effective as of July 1, 2020. If you fall into one of the exceptions involving medical conditions, please stay home if you are ill or at risk. Please bring your own mask and have it on as you approach the Church building.
- The main doors to the Church will be opened 20 minutes prior to the start of Mass. All other doors will be locked. Please arrive on time since we will need some time to implement these procedures.
- The main Church doors will be propped open, weather permitting, to allow contact-less entry. Please maintain social distancing during your entire time on our grounds and in our buildings.
- Everyone must wear a mask and sanitize their hands as they enter the Church. Hand sanitizer will be available at all entrances.
- Ushers will be available to assist in seating all worshippers.
- To maintain social distancing, pews will be blocked off to prevent worshipers from sitting in certain pews. Please do not sit in any area which has been taped off or you will be asked to move.
- Please proceed directly to your seat and do not linger or congregate anywhere else inside or outside the building – before or after Mass.
- Members living in the same household may sit closer together than 6 feet. All other worshippers must maintain at least 6 feet between them and other worshippers who are not living in their household at all times.
- For safety reasons, we are complying with the request to cease use of shared items. Such shared items include, but are not limited to:
  - Holy water fonts, which will be empty. Holy water will not be available.

- Devotional candles.
- Hymnals.
- Books in the Little Lambs Library.
- The public water fountain in the vestibule.

## **During Mass**

To comply with public health guidelines and best practices, you will also notice that some changes have been made to the liturgy. Some of these changes include:

- No entrance procession. Liturgical ministers may wear masks while on the altar.
- No hymnals and no singing.
- No collection during Mass. Donations may be placed in donation boxes which will be located inside the Church near the exit. We strongly encourage you to utilize our Online Giving platform to make your donations. Donations may also be mailed to the parish directly. We are grateful for the continued generosity and support of so many.
- No presentation of the gifts.
- No Sign of Peace or holding hands during the Lord's Prayer.
- No crying room in the Chapel. The Chapel will be closed.

Regarding Holy Communion:

- No one attending Mass is required to receive Communion. If you are not comfortable doing so, we encourage you to make an Act of Spiritual Communion instead.
- All Eucharistic Ministers will wear masks and sanitize their hands immediately prior to handing out Communion.
- Please do not wear gloves to receive Communion.
- To protect those administering and receiving Communion, we very strongly request and recommend that no one receive Communion on the tongue. There will also be no Precious Blood distributed.
- Ushers will direct you toward the appropriate Communion line.
- Please observe social distancing at all times while receiving Communion. The easiest way to do that is to keep several pews (at least 6 feet) between yourself and the person in front of you while in line and when returning to your pew.
- Please keep your mask on while in the Communion line. Once you receive Communion in your hand, step to the side, remove one side of your mask to consume the Blessed Sacrament and then immediately replace your mask and return to your seat, observing social distancing the entire time.

## **After Mass Concludes**

Ushers will provide instructions during dismissal to assist worshippers in leaving the Church only through the main doors in an orderly and socially distanced fashion.

For safety reasons, we will not be distributing printed bulletins. Bulletins will be available on the parish webpage and posted weekly on the parish Facebook page.

Please leave your mask on and use hand sanitizer when exiting the Church. Please go directly to your car and do not congregate inside or outside the Church after Mass, even for private prayer as cleaning must begin after Mass concludes.

**Thank you for your compliance with these guidelines!**