



Thursday, June 10, 2020

Memorial of Saint Barnabas, apostle

Dear friends,

I hope this finds you doing well as we prepare for the archdiocesan Year of the Eucharist, beginning this Sunday on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi). We may be in Ordinary Time, but we are richly blessed.

Outdoor Masses at Saint Mark

I am happy to share with you that we are moving forward with our plans to begin outdoor Masses with 100 people per Mass on Sunday, June 28. We will start with one weekly Sunday Mass at 10am.

As you know, this is only possible through the hard work of our parish staff and the generosity of many volunteers. If you are relatively healthy (not in a risk group, please), do not live with anyone in a risk group, and are willing to serve for at least two hours per Mass, contact Veronica at the parish office.

There are some important details that I want to emphasize:

- Masks are required for all attendees. We have a stock of masks donated to us for those who do not have them, but homemade masks are permitted and encouraged
- We will not be providing chairs. Please bring your own lawn or folding chairs
- Regardless of weather, Mass will be offered – bring a poncho or umbrella(s)!
- Limited bathroom facilities will be available in the school
- The Mass will look similar, but a bit different: spoken Mass parts (no singing) and the prayers of the faithful & sign of peace will be omitted
- Communion will be offered after Mass. The archbishop has requested that all communicants receive on the hand. Instructions will be offered at that time

Regardless, it is exciting to have this opportunity to offer the Mass together. And what an opportunity it is – we have a chance to focus on what is most essential: offering the sacrifice of Christ on the cross to our Heavenly Father as the Body of Christ. Even without the ornamentation of a beautiful building or singing, the source and summit of our faith – the Eucharistic sacrifice – is present to us. We are blessed.

How to come to Mass – a new process

Regarding attending Mass: pre-registration will be required. This will be done by phone call only, which will help ensure that all have an equal opportunity to put their name into the pool, as some do not have internet access. We will need the names, contact information, and total count of who would attend.

The Thursday and Friday before the upcoming Sunday Mass, randomly chosen parishioners (or households, where applicable) will be notified by e-mail (if provided) or by phone. You do not have to



confirm your attendance. However, if you can't come, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can fill those spots. Your name(s) would be returned to the pool for future Masses.

When you come, you will need to check in: plan on coming at least 30 minutes early. **If you have not shown up by the time Mass has started, your place(s) may be given to others.** Your name(s) would be returned to the pool for future Masses.

Some important caveats

Foremost: if you are in a risk group (65+, immunocompromised, et cetera), please think twice before signing up for Mass. While we will not turn you away, the efforts we've taken as a nation have been primarily for your benefit. It would be a terrible thing for the Mass to become the source of illness or even death. Please take an honest stock of your vulnerability to this virus and discern accordingly.

For all who wish to register, registration will open on Monday, June 22. If you call before that time, *your name will NOT be put into the pool.* I have decided to close the office for a week (June 15 through June 19) to allow our staff well-deserved and overdue time away. During this time, we will also be upgrading our e-mail and phone systems – there is a good chance that any messages you leave will not be stored or even lost! **Please wait to call to register yourself or your household on or after 9:00am on June 22** (our office number is (206) 364-7900). We will begin notifying attendees on June 25 & 26.

Please also be aware that for our first several Masses, **priority is being given to those newly receiving the sacraments** (Baptism, Confirmation, and First Holy Communion). As you can imagine, our elect, candidates, and children have eagerly anticipated being brought into the Church, receiving the final sacrament of initiation, and/or receiving the Body of Christ for the first time. Please pray for them as they take part in the mysteries of these sacraments.

Finally, a reassurance to all those who will be unable to come to Mass for whatever reason: the archbishop has extended the dispensation from the normal obligation to go to Sunday Mass. Please rest assured that we will continue to live stream Masses online at our Facebook page during this time.

Saint Paul reminds us that “Every athlete exercises discipline in every way. They do it to win a perishable crown, but we an imperishable one.” (1 Cor. 9:25). This has been and continues to be a challenging time, but by God's grace, our patient endurance and obedience has brought us to this point. Let us continue forward with trust in the Lord – offering our suffering and joys to the Lord in prayer together.

Yours in Christ,
Father Jacob Maurer

P.S. Some folks have expressed an interest in making homemade masks for use at the parish (I received a lovely priest-themed one this week – it's great!). We would be very grateful to receive those and offer them to those who come to Mass. Please contact Laura at the front office for details.