



September 9, 2020

Memorial of Saint Peter Claver

Dear friends,

Happy memorial of Saint Peter Claver! Patron of African slaves, his commemoration seems particularly timely as we grapple anew with the evils of racism and discern how we may do our part to support the dignity & rights of every person.

This week sees Saint Mark Catholic Classical School begin online classes. Kathy and all of our teachers have worked diligently throughout the summer to prepare both for our new curriculum and adapt to the needs of remote learning. Their extraordinary dedication and offering of additional effort helped ensure that we started ready for whatever this school year brings us. Please join me in thanking them and offering prayers for a blessed & successful year.

I would also like to extend thanks to all of those who have been helping and offered to help with Masses. We began indoor daily Masses last month and these have gone exceedingly well – folks have jumped in to assist with setup before Mass and cleaning afterwards. Though this is no small task, it has been made very easy with so many assisting. A shout-out to Carlos, our facilities maintenance manager, who has made sure we not only have supplies but has found creative tools to help us clean without too much bending & straining!

Parish communication upgrades

As you may have noticed, we have been undergoing several technology transitions at our parish. Our old phone system gave up the ghost early this month, prompting a scramble to install a new system. This is still in-process, though the new system is already providing some much-needed functionality that the old system could not offer! Please bear with us as we continue to set it up.

Our website is also undergoing renovation. We had hoped to do this incrementally, but it went through some issues that pushed us towards doing a complete re-build from scratch rather than trying to untangle them. Although the new design is fairly simple, is much more intuitive and functional than before. We'll be working on its continuing renovation in the weeks to come.

Coming up – indoor Sunday Mass

I would also like to tell you about the much-anticipated move from outdoor Sunday Masses to indoor celebrations. As you know, alongside sanitization and face masks, social distancing is a must during this time. As a result, there are strict limits on capacity for Masses. The decision to stay outdoors through September has been so that we can maximize potential attendance – at outdoor Masses we can have 200 people at a Mass (we are limited to 113 indoors).

Of course, we don't live in the tropics (much to my chagrin!) and can anticipate cool weather coming, with rain not far off. With that in mind, **we will begin offering indoor Sunday Masses on Sunday, October 4th, 2020.**

✠MJ✠

To maximize ease of registration and to ensure that we have an accurate count of who is actually coming, we are moving to an online registration system using Flocknote. It is a simple process that takes less than a minute to sign up you & your family. **Sign ups will be available the week before each Mass at the parish website, beginning on the Monday of each week** (“Register for Mass online”). If you have difficulties signing up, a staff member can assist you in the process.

The Mass schedule will also be different. Given the needs of setup, cleaning, and volunteer presence, **we will start with two Sunday Masses, one at 8:30 am and one at 10:30 am.** I have included an updated Mass schedule at the end of this letter. If we consistently hit capacity for those two times, we will evaluate adding more Mass times.

Please remember that Archbishop Etienne has dispensed with the obligation to attend Sunday Mass; **you are not obliged to attend Sunday Mass** - though we are strongly recommended to devote ourselves to a suitable time of prayer by ourselves or with family when we can not attend Mass (CIC 1248 §2). Consider also reaching out to those family members, friends, or members of the community who may be feeling isolated or alone. A friendly phone call to catch up or pray costs us just a few minutes and can make all the difference to those who might be struggling.

Clarifying a misunderstanding

I have heard from many folks that there have been some in our community who have felt that they were being discouraged from coming to Masses by me. In particular, our older members have expressed that they were worried that they should not be coming to church because of this.

Foremost, I want to apologize for any hurt or confusion that I have caused in conveying any sense of unwelcome. Though inadvertent, it seems that this has nonetheless been the case. I am sorry.

Please rest assured that all are welcome to come to Mass. While we must follow the archdiocesan and state requirements, no one will be turned away based on parish membership or age. If you would like to come to Mass, you are welcome! At the same time, I ask that anyone who is of an age or has a health condition where they might be especially vulnerable to carefully consider whether or not this is an acceptable risk. At the end of the day, all of our efforts are made to safeguard those who are most vulnerable – we want to make sure that the Mass is not a vector for any illness but instead a source of grace and peace.

Let us continue to pray for each other, whether together or from a distance! May God bless you all.

Yours in Christ,

Father Maurer
Pastor, Saint Mark parish



Saint Mark parish

Mass & confession schedule

(effective October 4, 2020)

Sunday 8:30 am & 10:30 am

(register at www.saintmarkshoreline.org)

Monday

9:00 am – church open
9:30 am – daily Mass
4:00 pm – church closed

Tuesday

9:00 am – church open
(no daily Mass)
4:00 pm – church closed

Wednesday

9:00 am – church open
5:00 pm - confessions
6:30 pm – daily Mass
4:00 pm – church closed

Thursday

9:00 am – church open
9:30 am – daily Mass
4:00 pm – church closed

Friday

9:00 am – church open
9:30 am – daily Mass
4:00 pm – church closed

Saturday

9:30 am – daily Mass
3:00 pm – confessions