



May 8, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Like many of you, I, too am disappointed to read that our governor has not lifted the stay at home order, and so, we are not yet in a position to begin the process of reopening our parish. I was hoping that by mid-May, we might be able to restore some of our regular schedules- but alas that is not to be! Yet, I know the reasons behind this decision and the importance of keeping all of us safe and driving down the infection rates in our community- so I am happy to continue to pray with and for all of you and *offer up* this inconvenience for the good of our community.

***Masses at St. Francis of Assisi Parish.***

But I have heard your voices and especially the many desires that have been expressed to receive Holy Communion. Under the current order we are permitted to have up to 10 people in the Church for Mass. So, I have decided to utilize this and beginning with this letter we will invite registered parishioners ***only*** to sign up online for Masses May 11- 28 when the current order lapses. Hopefully, then we will have a clearer idea of what is permitted.

***So, here is how I am hoping this will work:***

- Attached here you will find a sign-up sheet with a list of all our Masses: <https://stfrancisa2.wufoo.com/forms/i-would-like-to-attend-a-mass/>  
You can sign up for any of these Masses in any order of preference.
- Each family member needs to be listed individually.
- Please remember to add your email address and telephone number.
- Once we receive your names- we will draw up a list and let you all know who has been chosen.
- You will be contacted by email within one business day.
- As always, we can never guarantee your first choice- so we ask you to bear with us-we will strive to be as fair as possible.
- When you attend these Masses, please remember to wear a mask and to exercise social distancing- thankfully, as we have big spacious church, there is plenty of room to spread out.
- Entry will be through the double doors next to the PAC -15 minutes before each scheduled Mass.

As we begin this process, please remember that ***only*** registered parishioners will be invited to these Masses- so please do not advertise this or invite non-parishioners to attend, as they will only be turned away. Even as I write, I know that there will be disappointment for some- but I hoping that all will understand why we are doing it this way. I would also encourage our seniors and those with underlying medical conditions to consider staying at home at this time and to continue to join us through our online streaming.

### ***Thursday Holy Hour and Adoration.***

I have also decided beginning May 14 to restore a few hours to our current Thursday Eucharistic Adoration. Sue Wawrzaszek, our Coordinator of Worship, will contact all those currently on our list for Adoration and offer them the opportunity to come and pray during these hours. If, however, you are interested in being part of Adoration, please contact the Parish Office at 734-769-2550.



### ***Sacraments of Initiation and Reconciliation***

With regards to First Communion and Confirmation, we may have to wait a while longer to see how we can celebrate these important sacraments. Once we have finalized our plans, we will contact all our candidates immediately. For those who wish to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, please visit our parish website at <https://www.stfrancisa2.com/> for times of our drive through confessions with Fr. Tony.

***So that is where we currently are at-*** a little cautious progress has been made!

Personally, I am looking forward to having a few folks back in the pews. As you can imagine the experience of preaching to an empty church is not the most exciting- but I know that many of you and your families are watching and joining me in prayer, and that gives me great hope and joy!

And we need to keep praying- first of all, to pray for a vaccine and to ask the Lord to grant wisdom and direction to those in the medical and pharmaceutical worlds who are searching for this remedy. We pray also for all who are sick and for those who care for them and finally we pray for our families and community, that during this time of disconnect, we will continue to trust in the Lord and seek his guidance. Of course, as it is May, we turn to our Blessed Mother and ask her to intercede for us at this time of crisis. As a loving mother, she knows our best interests and will present them to Christ.

Finally, once again, I want to take this opportunity to thank you all for your kind words of encouragement, your gifts and above all your concern and prayers. As your parish priests, we are buoyed by all your expressions of love and support.

This is certainly a time of great challenge for all of us, but let us remember the words of St. Paul ***“we are afflicted in every way, but not constrained; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed; always***

*carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our body”* (2 Cor 4:8-10). As a great fan of the Apostle, those words have kept me both sane and focused on my task as pastor in these very strange times. They remind me, that all we are, and all that we do, begins and ends in Christ.

So, stay safe- remember this too shall pass and very soon we will be able to gather together again to bask in the great mercy of God and to celebrate our identity, as part of God’s family. Until then blessings to all!

*Fr. James*

For more information on our Masses and events, please see our website at: <https://www.stfrancisa2.com/> and blessings on all our mothers this weekend.