



St. William the Abbot
Roman Catholic Church

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July 27, 2020

To the St. William the Abbot Family,

Gratitude! I want to begin by thanking you for your prayerful support and spiritual presence throughout this difficult time. The time of COVID-19 has been a challenge for all of us, and yet throughout it all, St. William's has remained an oasis for spiritual and temporal needs. I want to thank you for your patience during the last few months as we have navigated through this unprecedented time. We have received several forms of guidance and recommendations from the Diocese of Rockville Centre, the CDC, and the State of New York since the beginning of the Pandemic that have allowed us to maintain a safe campus for our parishioners and community.

While there are many questions in regards to Mass Schedule, Parish Ministries, the School and Faith Formation, and so many more questions, as of now we just do not have the answers. I continue to ask for your patience. But there are few things that we do know that we can communicate to you at this time.

God's Mercy, Hope, Forgiveness, and Love are being lived by so many of you in innovative and real ways in your homes and around the community. Those who are most in need are being cared for and served by Parish Outreach and your generosity. Personal and group prayer and witness are not being limited to the four walls of the Church building or the SWA Campus. Unofficial Rosary, Padre Pio, and Bible studies are happening in the homes and backyards, allowing the Gospel to be preached. The Sacraments of Mass, First Holy Communion, Confession, and Weddings are still being celebrated with great joy. Thank you for your creativity, flexibility and love for the Mission of the Church! Here are few other updates:

The Mass Schedule will remain the same until **Monday, September 7, 2020** (Labor Day).

- Daily Mass 8:30 am Monday – Friday.
- Saturday Mass – 5 pm.
- Sunday Mass 8 am, 10 am, and 12 pm Mass (Also Livestreamed). Communion will be made available in the parking lot for parishioners following 12 pm Mass until 1:30 pm.

The Diocese of Rockville Centre has stated that the **Dispensation** from the obligation to attend Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation Masses remains in effect until further notice.

The CDC, State of New York, and Nassau County encourage you to take all safety precautions for the health of yourself, other parishioners, the clergy, staff, and volunteers.

- It is highly recommended that the elderly, anyone that is 65 and over, under the age of 2, anyone with compromised health, and anyone that has been in contact with someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 day should not attend Mass.
- If you have been diagnosed with a positive test for COVID-19, have not been cleared by a physician, or have not completed the 14-day required quarantine, you should not attend Mass.
- If you feel sick or have a temperature, please do not attend Mass.

The mandated guidelines from the State of New York and the Diocese of Rockville Centre permit the church to have up to 50% capacity per Mass and celebrate Mass.

- Based on the guidelines and allowing for social distancing of 6ft, this will allow for up to 160 parishioners allowed in the church.
- Attending Mass will be on a first come, first serve basis.

- The Church doors will be opened 30 minutes prior to Mass.
- Parishioners must wear a mask when on the church property, walking on the grounds, inside the church, and during Mass.
- Parishioners are asked to bring their own hand sanitizers, masks, and antibacterial wipes.
- The restrooms will be closed, only open for emergencies.
- Please follow the seating arrangement that the Task Force members will assign to you.
- Please maintain the 6ft Social Distancing Protocol apart from other Parishioners.
- There will be no kneeling during the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we ask that you stand or sit.
- We are asking you to enter the Church using the main doors on Jackson Avenue.
- Your continued generosity has not only sustained us, but helped us to thrive. You will notice the collection will no longer take place, but there will be an offertory basket provided at the entrance of the church to drop off envelopes.
- The Church will remain closed when Mass is not being celebrated.
- Until further notice there will be no entrance processions or recessions through the congregation so as to avoid close contact with numerous people.
- The offertory procession (bringing up the gifts) will be omitted until further notice.
- The invitation to the faithful to exchange a sign of peace continues to be omitted entirely.
- In order to reflect both the Church's great reverence for the Eucharist, while also providing appropriate precautions against infection, Holy Communion in the Diocese of Rockville Centre will be distributed **after Mass has ended**.
- The Precious Blood may not be distributed.
- Only Priests, Deacons, and Seminarians are allowed in the Sacristy.
- Matt and the Musicians will be practicing social distancing in the choir loft; there will be no choir for this time.
- The ministries of Altar Servers, EM's, Lectors, and Ushers will continue to be on hold.
- There will be no hymnals, missalettes or envelopes distributed.
- Holy water fonts will remain empty. There are empty holy water bottles in the exits that you may fill at your home and bring with you to the next Mass to have them blessed.
- There will be deep cleaning performed in the church after each Mass, we ask all parishioners to exit the church immediately after Mass.

All of these items are presented as guardrails, not obstacles in order for us to have a place of prayer and worship that safe and beautiful. We all desire to return to normal – or the way we have done things in the past. Unfortunately, there is still too much unknown for us to do that during these re-opening phases. Please be patient with me and those who have been so helpful in assisting me in implementing these new strategies and expectations. We ask for continued prayers, support, and creative recommendations – but also your understanding. As we receive additional information and guidelines, we will continue to keep you informed. Please visit our website stwilliam.org for the most up to the minute information and videos.

May God continue to bless you and the St. William the Abbot Family.

Peace,

