



Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

528 E. Stein Highway
Seaford, DE 19973

302-629-3591

Office of the Pastor

May 20, 2020

After more than 2 months, we have received the happy news that we will be able to re-open our church and be able to gather in a limited way to celebrate Mass! Naturally, we will still have to respect the power of the coronavirus and follow the directives of our bishop and the governor, but it will be so good to have a congregation again. According to the directives received from the diocese, we will begin with daily Masses on June 1, and celebrate Sunday Mass on June 7, the Feast of the Holy Trinity.

I have consulted with the Parish Council, and following their recommendations and the instruction from the bishop, I can announce the following guidelines:

- Daily Masses will resume June 1 and be celebrated Monday – Thursday at 9 am.
- We will initially have only one Mass on Sunday at 10:30 am, so that we can acclimate ourselves to the needed changes. The Parish Council and I will then evaluate and decide when to add the Saturday 5 pm and Sunday 8 am Masses back into the schedule.
- Due to the large numbers, high infection rate and difficulties with social distancing, the Spanish Mass will be the last one we add back into the schedule.
- The governor's "stay-at-home" directive for those considered vulnerable (over 65 years of age, underlying medical conditions, etc) remains in effect and they should not come to church at this time.
- We will continue to live-stream the Sunday Mass for those who are not able or permitted to come to church. The bishop has extended the dispensation from Sunday Mass until further notice.
- The number of people admitted to church will be limited to the first 100. Once this number is reached, the doors will be closed, and no others will be permitted to enter. Only the parking lot side entrance towards Stein Highway will be used.
- Social distancing **MUST** be practiced at all times, outside as well as inside the building. We will indicate 6 ft. intervals in the aisles of church.
- Everyone entering must wear a mask and keep it on at all times.
- While we will try to keep the church as clean as possible, we cannot guarantee that the church is germ/virus-free. Everyone is responsible for taking precautions to insure your own health. For example, we urge everyone to bring a disinfectant wipe to use on the pew before you use it.
- Anyone attending mass as an individual or as part of a couple should sit on the end seats of the center aisle. Those who are part of a family with three or more should sit on the end seats of the side isles. We will only use every other pew to maintain social distancing. Please do not sit in areas that are marked with red tape. The ushers will assist you.
- A basket will be placed at the back of the center aisle to receive your offerings. We will not pass baskets through the church.

- We do not have staff to maintain restrooms and disinfect them between uses as required. As per the recommendation from the Parish Council, and with the approbation of the diocese, restrooms will be closed. If this is a problem for you, please consider staying home.
- To decrease the risk of contagion, we will not sing at Mass for now.
- For the reception of holy communion, social distancing must be observed. Everyone will remain on one of the taped lines and move up the center aisle as the line progresses. All will receive holy communion in their hand. Your mask should remain on until you have the host placed in your hand. You will then step 6 feet to the side (to the mark on the floor), slide your mask down and consume the host. After replacing the mask over your mouth and nose, return to your seat by the side aisle. Please be careful not to touch the pews as you move in or out.
- Once the mass has ended, please be seated. The ushers will dismiss the congregation one aisle at a time, beginning at the back of church. As you leave, please maintain the social distancing required. Once you are out of church, go immediately to your car. No one may stand outside of church talking to others.

While these directives may seem silly or overkill to some, they are meant to keep us all safe. It is a way to show our love for one another. If they are not followed, we will have to cancel public Masses again.

I know you are as happy as I and are anxious to have life return to normal. I also know you realize that this will take time, and we all have to be patient as we continue to battle this virus. I thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding as our parish begins to re-open the church. We also hope to be able to move into our new Parish Office Center within the next few weeks, and so there is much for which to give thanks. Please know that I continue to pray for you, and I look forward to seeing some of you in June and the rest as soon as safely possible after that. Stay safe and remember to pray for all who are striving to keep us healthy and supplied with the necessities of life during these trying times.

Asking God's blessing on you and your loves ones, I am

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steven B. Giuliano". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Steven B Giuliano
Pastor