

from the desk of Fr. Andrew Ricci
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INSTRUCTIONS AS WE PREPARE TO REOPEN OUR CHURCHES FOR MASS

June 1, 2020

Dear Friends,

As we begin to reopen our parishes, I have some important points to share with all of you. Please take a few moments to review this information.

Preliminary Points

- 1. Bishop Powers continues to keep the dispensation from Mass in place**
 - a. If you are sick, please stay home
 - b. If you have concerns about your own health or medical situation, please stay home
 - c. Online Masses will continue on Facebook and our website: www.superiorcatholics.org
- 2. We are instituting a number of new practices**
 - a. Our churches will be cleaned, and key areas sanitized after every Mass
 - b. We are encouraging people to wear face masks
 - c. Hand sanitizer will be available at the entrances in all churches
 - d. We will only use half our pews, based on the guidelines for social distancing
 - e. Households will sit together, maintaining a 6-foot space from other households
- 3. The celebration of Mass will look very different**
 - a. There will be no sung congregational music, all responses will be spoken
 - b. Only communion bread will be offered; the communion cup will be only for the priest
 - c. Ministries will be limited to some specifically chosen people, “Conductors” who will assist with moving people through the Church (see below on the next page)
 - d. The ministry schedule will not be posted; rather, the priest will do it by himself or with an assistant (see below on the next page)
 - e. People may deposit their envelope/cash in a basket at the end of Mass
- 4. Pastoral Care to the sick and homebound is not yet ready to begin**
 - a. We need time to work with nursing homes, hospitals, and county guidelines; stay tuned
 - b. We are waiting for more direction from the Bishop’s Office before we start our planning
- 5. Your patience, understanding and willingness to adjust are greatly appreciated!**
 - a. This is new territory for all of us; we are learning and discovering as we go
 - b. I ask that all of us practice charity toward one another; if you are eager to return to “normal” practices – please be kind to those who are cautious; if you are very concerned about health and safety – please be kind to those who are taking more risks
 - c. Above all: we are in this together; we need to work together as the Body of Christ

Timeline to reopen for Mass

1. The first church to reopen will be the Cathedral on Wednesday, June 3rd for daily Mass at 8:30am
2. The Cathedral will be the only church open on the weekend of June 6/7 (this will be our trial run)
3. Fr. Ron will start celebrating daily Mass at Holy Assumption on June 9, pending approval from Bishop
4. The regular parish weekend Mass schedule will resume on June 13/14 at all parishes
5. Daily Masses at St. Anthony - Superior, and St. Anthony – Lake Nebagamon will be determined later

Ministry changes

1. Since Mass will be very simple, there will be very few ministries required
2. Communion, Greeters, Ushers, Cantors, Servers – will not be scheduled over the summer
3. I will be choosing some “Conductors” in each parish to assist with specific duties:
 - a. As ushers – getting people into the pews that are available, helping with the collection
 - b. As health care advocates – pointing out sanitizer, helping with spot cleaning
 - c. As assistants to the priest – if we need someone to help with communion/reading
 - d. Note: These folks must be in fantastic health and wear masks
4. My hope is to return to our standard ministries in the fall, pending COVID-19
 - a. The next couple of months will give us some time to review the number of COVID-19 cases in the area
 - b. This simple format to ministry will allow us to slowly work ministries back in as we are ready
5. Note: All current ministers will be asked to assess their health risks and determine for themselves if they should continue doing their ministry – please know that your health and safety matters most to me

Practical Points

1. The seating capacity of the Church is critical for our planning for Masses, Weddings, and Funerals
 - a. We will use 25% of seating capacity as the guide for how many people we can have in our parishes and still follow decent social distancing guides
 - i. Cathedral 800 capacity = 200 for now
 - ii. Holy Assumption 275 capacity = 68 for now
 - iii. St. Anthony 275 capacity = 68 for now
 - iv. St. William 250 capacity = 62 for now
 - v. St. Anthony, LN 200 capacity = 50 for now (this is using the Parish Hall)
2. Cleaning and Sanitizing are now a high priority – this MUST BE DONE
 - a. After every weekend Mass, Wedding and Funeral
 - i. Cleaning & Sanitizing: bathrooms, handrails, pews, doors/knobs, etc.
 - ii. Restocking hand sanitizer, soap/paper towels
 - b. After every daily Mass
 - i. Spot cleaning and sanitizing as needed
 - ii. Checking supplies
3. Funeral luncheons on parish property are suspended
4. Scheduling Funerals, Weddings and other events now must include time for cleaning
5. After Mass, please exit immediately and respect social distancing guidelines
6. Baptisms will now be scheduled on Saturdays at 1:00pm at Cathedral, all other churches by availability
7. Parish groups can now meet, but they must practice basic social distancing and sanitizing guidelines
8. I honestly do not know what we will do for parish dinners yet in late summer and fall. Stay tuned.

If it sounds like a lot, it is. Again, I appreciate everyone’s patience and understanding. May this time become a rich opportunity for all of us to become kinder, more caring and gentler with one another. We are in this together; may we work together for the common good of all.

I will be sending out more mailings in the coming weeks. Please know that you all remain in my prayers.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Andrew 