

June 2, 2021

Dear Muncie Catholic Parishioners:

Fifteen months ago, we began unusual practices to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. By the grace of God, the glimmer of hope is shining forth with recent success of the vaccines. It is starting to look like life may return to some sense of normal. While we are excited that social life can ramp up and our parish families can congregate again with more freedoms, we remember in our prayers those who suffered and even lost their lives due to this horrible illness. And, our prayers continue for those who grieve, face anxiety, are at-risk, and those in the world who don't have access to suitable health care.

As we return to a more normal practice of our faith, there are some things I want to make you aware of:

1. **As of June 12, 2021, the dispensation from Sunday Mass will be lifted.** This means that all Catholics who do not have a suitable reason from missing Mass are obligated once again to attend Sunday Mass (or a Saturday vigil). If you are sick or experiencing symptoms, please stay home and seek appropriate medical assistance. Otherwise, we look forward to seeing you in-person!
2. **Effective June 5, 2021, when at Mass we will observe the following (until further notice):**
 - a. Masks won't be required and pew restrictions will be removed.
 - b. Hand sanitizer & masks will still be provided at entrances for those who wish to use them.
 - c. Our hymnals will return to the pews and congregational music will be incorporated again.
 - d. The gifts of bread & wine will continue to be at the altar (no offertory procession).
 - e. The financial collection will be taken by the ushers via baskets, as is customary.
 - f. A no-contact sign of peace will return (we won't be shaking hands). It is appropriate to say "peace be with you" to those seated near you, but please remain in your own pew for this.
 - g. Priests & Eucharistic Ministers will sanitize hands before and after distributing Communion.
 - h. Holy water will be available at entrances and fonts will be cleaned weekly.
 - i. The distribution of Precious Blood from common chalices remains suspended at this time.
 - j. Pews will be sanitized once per week, in addition to regular Church cleaning.
3. We recognize that some parishioners may be vulnerable, caring for an at-risk loved one, or unable to be vaccinated. Out of charity for these members of our Catholic family, **we will celebrate one weekend Mass in the Muncie Catholic Pastorate where advanced sanitation will take place, music/singing will be limited, and masks will be required.** This Mass will be **Saturday 4:30pm at St. Francis of Assisi**. Thank you for your cooperation and charity, particularly at this Mass.

We continue to evaluate, and will develop a plan for, other elements of our parish ministries (such as funeral dinners, in-person meetings, and nursing home or hospital visitation). Praise God we can return to a more beautiful expression of our faith at Mass!

God Bless,



Fr. Eric Underwood, pastor