

June 7, 2020

My dear parishioners,

Jesus is Lord! He is with us.



We have been on an unprecedented journey of faith together during these last months. The ongoing COVID 19 pandemic has been a time of great challenges and struggles for everyone in our community. There also have been moments of profound graces. The ministry of the parish has continued, and now the Archdiocese of Hartford has given us official *Guidelines for the Opening of Churches for Public Worship*.

The entire re-opening document can be found online at archdioceseofhartford.org and also on our parish website mmcparish.com. It is very important to review the entire document, as all the directives are to be followed.

To the right are a few of the guidelines and directives as pertaining to our gradual return to full sacramental life in the parish. Several other topics are covered in the official document. This process will require a team effort and patient cooperation from everyone, always with a focus upon the integrity of the liturgy and the sacraments, and our communal well-being.

Non-sacramental parish activities (such as in-person group meetings and events, social gatherings, bingo, etc.) are still suspended. Over time, as the conditions and protocols allow, these activities will be reinstated with the permission of the pastor. All parish activities will need to follow all applicable guidelines, restrictions, and requirements.

As we continue our preparations, please consider donating the necessary (and often hard to find) cleaning supplies – these include hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, disinfectant sprays, paper towels, etc. These can be dropped off from 9 am until 1 pm outside the rectory back door or from 1 pm until 5 pm inside the cry room near the vestibule at St. Leo the Great Church.

Also, please continue to consult our parish website (mmcparish.com) and parish Facebook page for further updates, reminders, and ways to support the work of the parish.

I remain grateful for all the efforts of our entire community, including our dedicated staff members and volunteers, and I ask God to always guide, protect, and strengthen us.

All the way – to God's embrace.

Sincerely,
Rev. John L. Lavorgna

A synopsis of some key points concerning the celebration of Mass:

As of Monday, June 8, 2020, parishes may reopen for the public celebration of **weekday Masses only**. A date for the resuming of Sunday Mass is not yet determined.

Until further notice – the weekday Mass for our parish will be celebrated at 8 AM each morning at Saint Leo the Great Church on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Archbishop Blair has dispensed all Catholics in the Archdiocese from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass (including of course the Saturday vigil) until September 6, 2020. This dispensation will stay in effect even after the resuming of the public celebration of Sunday Mass in the churches of the Archdiocese.

In this first stage of resuming public worship, Masses will be subject to a limit of 25% of church building capacity or 100 people, whichever is less. This includes the priest celebrant and anyone assisting in the liturgy.

The elderly, those with pre-existing conditions, those who are fearful or anxious, and those taking care of a sick or homebound person are not to be concerned about missing Mass and may stay home as desired, and take advantage of options for remote participation in Mass, through television or online services.

Everyone at Mass is required to wear masks of face coverings and is asked to bring hand sanitizer for use during the liturgy. Exceptions are allowed for children under five years old or less (at parents' discretion) and those with verified legitimate health reasons.

Everyone at Mass is required to keep proper social distancing while in the church. This will require everyone to remain 6 feet apart from anyone who is not a member of their household.

No one is obligated to receive Holy Communion during the celebration of Mass. Communicants will receive the consecrated host in their hand, step to the side, lower their mask, consume the host, re-place their mask, and return to their pew.

The process of entering the church, being seated, and exiting after Mass will be regulated.

