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May 27, 2020

Dear Parishioners of St. Sebastian,

An earlier communication from me alerted you to the reopening of Church for public Mass at St. Sebastian on May 31, 2020. Today's communication provides the logistical and liturgical details all parishioners should know regarding this return to Mass. A return to public Mass is something we have all waited for and hope to continue. This will depend upon how well safe strategies for having Mass can be implemented. What follows is our local implementation of the Archbishop's directives, guidelines and considerations for all parishes.

To remind everyone, public Masses are only allowed for Sunday liturgies (and, if parishes have them, Masses of anticipation). No other public Masses or liturgical celebrations (including Sacraments) may be held at this time. Much study and discussion have gone into making all these decisions and they are intended to serve the best interests of our parish community.

Please be aware that Mass will not be the same as in the past. We ask for your understanding. If everyone carefully reads and abides by all the important information provided here, we are hopeful that all may enjoy a safe and reverent return to Mass. We will need to patiently experiment with this process.

These are stressful and challenging times for everyone. The Church especially wishes to be of service to all as best it can. We ask for your understanding and full cooperation as we carefully move forward. Any questions or suggestions you have are most welcome. Please e-mail Mike Kamenski at [mkamenski@saintsebs.org](mailto:mkamenski@saintsebs.org) or call 414-852-1854.

I hold all of you in my prayers each day and look forward to sharing Eucharist with you as we gather around the table of the Lord!

Yours in Christ's peace,

Fr. Peter Patrick  
Pastor of St. Sebastian and St. Catherine Parishes



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# Mass in Time of Pandemic

## GENERAL COMMENTS

- Currently, I have decided to have two Masses at St. Sebastian: 8:00am and 6:00pm. This will allow our maintenance staff time to complete required cleaning and sanitizing of the entire Church after each Mass (pews, bathrooms, entrances, etc.). The number of people who choose to come will be carefully monitored to evaluate if the addition of another Mass might be necessary.
- The Archbishop encourages those at high-risk to COVID19 to *please stay home*. This includes those who are 60 or older, those with a fever or flu-like symptoms, those with underlying health conditions or concerns, and those who are anxious to be in public places (fearful of viral spread). Furthermore, the Archbishop has extended the dispensation for Sunday Mass obligation until July 5<sup>th</sup> for everyone. Please exercise prudence when deciding whether or not to attend.
- For those who choose to remain home, we encourage you to join us through our live-streamed Sunday Mass on Facebook or at [www.saintsebastianonline.net](http://www.saintsebastianonline.net) at 8:00am.
- We are required to keep attendance at Mass to 25% of our seating capacity. We therefore may have a maximum of 227 persons (total) at any one Mass. Our numbers indicate that we should be either close to or under this number at each of our two Masses.

## ARRIVAL AT MASS

- Enter through the South (#11) or the East (#14) entrances to the Gathering Space. All other church doors will be locked to enable the number of persons entering the church to be counted accurately.
- We highly recommend that all persons wear masks that cover both your nose and mouth.
- Please use hand sanitizer as you enter the church (it will be provided).
- Holy water fonts have been emptied.
- The South and East Gathering Space doors will be opened not earlier than 15 minutes before each Mass. Please plan to not arrive at the last minute so we may avoid delays in getting people into the church.
- All are asked to patiently enter in line observing, “social distancing” (6 feet between people) except for families who live in the same household. Families may stand together in line and may sit together in the pew in church.
- If you have special needs (ADA) regarding entering the church, please call Mike Kamenski at 414-852-1854 to make special arrangements.
- Ushers have been asked to wear masks and to have no physical contact when greeting and/or guiding parishioners.

- Ushers will guide two lines (one from each set of outside Gathering Space doors) to the center inside East church doors so all may be counted.
- If the number of persons reaches 227, ushers will stop allowing persons into the church and will invite any remaining persons to consider attending a different Mass –
  - for 8am attendees – 6pm Mass at St. Sebastian or 9am Mass at St. Catherine, OR Mass online,
  - for 6pm – Mass online.
- Every other pew has been roped off. Sit only in the pews that are not roped off, and again, please observe social distancing (it is fine to sit closely with your family). Ushers may ask you to move slightly if you are too close to someone.

## **DURING MASS**

- Hymnals, orders of worship, envelopes (etc.) have been removed from the pews. The Archdiocese encourages the use of very familiar music in a repetitive manner. A cantor is allowed to “lead singing” (choirs are not allowed). Humming is an idea that is encouraged since many will not know all the words of a song by heart. It also lessens the higher risk of spreading and taking in viral particulates that occur during singing. Please consider this safer manner of musical participation.
- There will be no procession of the gifts of bread and wine.
- There will be no collection taken at the usual time. Instead, as persons are dismissed toward the three sets of East Church doors to the Gathering Space, baskets will be placed there for parishioners to make their offerings. Thank you!
- Physical contact during the Sign of Peace is not allowed.
- Reception of Communion will be under one species only – the consecrated host. Also, Communion may only be received “in the hand” not on the tongue. Four usual “bread” stations will be used with four usual lines.
- Social distancing of at least 6 feet between people not living in the same household must be followed in line to receive Communion (follow the marks on the floor).

## **DEPARTURE AFTER MASS**

- Departing from Mass will not be as usual. Again, we ask your patience through this process. In order to achieve a safe dismissal, all persons will be asked to remain in their pew following the concluding hymn. An Usher will dismiss people by pew to exit only through the East church doors leading to the Gathering Space. (In Case of Emergency - all church doors may be used to exit.) Dismissal by pew will be randomized weekly so that no one section is always first or last.
- Congregating after Mass cannot be allowed. The Gathering Space has been cleared of all chairs and furniture. Persons are asked to promptly leave following Mass so that cleaning and sanitizing may begin. This will require many hours for our team to accomplish.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- Persons wishing to take Communion to someone at home are please asked **not to do so** unless you have previously been properly trained in this ministry. More information about this is forthcoming.
- The parish Gathering Space “prayer book” is currently not available. If you have a prayer request, please use the newly initiated “prayer wall” at [wepray@saintsebs.org](mailto:wepray@saintsebs.org).
- Non-essential gatherings remain suspended. This includes “Children’s Liturgy of the Word” and post-Mass social gatherings/refreshments.
- The only bathrooms to be used are in the Gathering Space. Limits of two persons are allowed inside at one time.
- All votive candles have been removed from the church.
- Paper bulletins and other handouts are not allowed. The parish bulletin is available online, or you may call the parish office to request that a copy be sent to your home.
- Again, please note that a deep cleaning and sanitizing will occur after each Mass. Anything you can do to assist with keeping the church facilities safe and clean is appreciated. Please properly dispose of any paper or tissue you may use during Mass.