June 8, 2020

Dear Parishioners:

Bishop Joensen has given permission for the city parishes to resume daily Mass. The Cathedral will offer the Eucharist at the usual 12:10 noon time in the Cathedral naïve, main church, starting Monday, June 15. It is important to realize that you are most welcome to attend daily Mass, but take the risk of being exposed to the coronavirus. Due to the Covid-19 virus, the diocese has established requirements/guidelines to be honored when we choose to come to Mass. Please be aware of the following items necessary to observe,

1. The Diocese of Des Moines strongly recommends that masks be worn throughout the liturgy. St. Ambrose will have masks available at the entrance if needed. Anyone over the age of five years should wear a mask.
2. Pump sanitizer bottles are available to use upon entering and exiting the church. You are welcome to bring your own as well.
3. Enter the Cathedral on the south side (High Street) at the double doors which will be propped open so not to touch door handles. The 6th Avenue ramp door will be available to enter for those who need it. Individual seating will take time. You are advised to arrive early.
4. Ushers will escort each individual to a designated pew observing 6 feet distance. You will not be able to pick/choose a pew in keeping with “where we always sit.” Couples or families who come in one car may be seated together.
5. When Mass is over, please remain seated, as ushers will dismiss by row and you will be escorted to the east and west doors only (not south double doors).
6. Collection baskets will be available at the tables at the doors for those who wish to make an offering each day.
7. There will be no physical sign of peace exchange. Smiles, nods, thumbs up, waves are permissible.
8. Communicants are asked to remain in their seats/pews during the distribution of Holy Communion. The Communion ministers will come directly to your pew for your reception of the Lord’s Body. Our Lord’s Precious Blood will not be offered.
9. Those choosing to receive the Eucharist in the hand will receive first.
10. Those who want to receive the Eucharist on the tongue will be invited to form a procession at the end of Communion with safe distancing in the center aisle, and can receive from the Eucharistic minister located on the side of the church (east or west) where you will return to your seats. Ushers will assist with the procession observing safe distancing. The floors will be marked as well.
11. Sitting, standing, kneeling, and responding to the prayers at Mass is as usual.
12. The use of missalettes/hymnals is suspended until further notice.
13. Please refrain from gathering before or after Mass unless you observe the 6 feet safe distancing.
14. The Cathedral must be sanitized after every Mass is completed.
15. Altar servers are suspended until further notice.

(OVER)
16. The diocese will continue to “live stream” Masses from the Cathedral. Viewing is available on the diocesan YouTube.

The resumption of weekday Masses (Monday-Friday) is Phase 1 of 3 Phases to resume parish life. The diocese will give a parish permission to begin Phase 2 (weekend Masses) when they have met the Phase 1 requirements. Phase 3 will resume parish life experiences (e.g. RE sessions, youth ministry, social gatherings, meetings, etc.) at a later date determined by the diocese.

I realize the mode of worship now requested is very different than what we have been accustomed to. Patience, understanding and charity will be needed by everyone in order to ensure safety. If you wish to volunteer to assist in a ministry role (Lector, Eucharistic Minister, Usher, “Sanitizer”/Help sanitize the church after Mass”) at weekday Masses, contact Debbie Rohrer at 515-288-7411 x 300 or email her at rohrerdebbie2@gmail.com.

The good news is that we will again regather around the Table of the Lord and continue to give greater honor and glory to God through the celebration of the Eucharist. Be safe/well and know of my prayer for all of us in this transitional time! Please keep this letter for reference.

Cordially,

Father John O. Bertogli
Rector