

Phase 1 Preparations For Opening Our Churches

As Bishop Louis Kihneman anticipates in the next few weeks, when government and/or health officials declare that Phase I of easing Coronavirus restrictions can begin, we will be able to celebrate Mass publicly in a limited way, but with certain restrictions to be applied. The following is what the Bishop has recommended and what St. Clare is already working on.

- Bishop Kihneman will continue to dispense the faithful from the obligation to participate in Holy Mass, particularly for anyone who is ill will be asked to stay at home in charity to others. If you are sick, please let Paul Pitts or Fr. Jacob-Matthew know.
- Vulnerable individuals, those 65 and older or with underlying health conditions should continue to shelter in place. Families with vulnerable individuals are encouraged to continue to take special precautions.
- Hand sanitizer has been placed at the front door, on inside tables leading into the church and Parish Center, on the stand for use by Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, and on the table that separates the priest and the deacon/acolyte, and in both the restrooms.
- Masks for clergy, ushers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Altar Servers, will be required, especially when distributing Holy Communion. We have parishioners working on making masks available.
- All of our pews will be sanitized before each Mass.
- All doors used for entering the building, the Church, and parish center will be sanitized before each Mass.
- Blue tape has been positioned on the floor and on the pews to accommodate required social spacing. Every other pew will not be used for seating. Additional seating has been placed in the Parish Center and marked for social spacing. The speaker system has been turned on so those seated in the Parish Center can still hear everything being said from the Altar.
- The Music Issue books have been removed from the pews, and only the Missalettes with the readings remain, and those will be sanitized after every Mass as well.
- Seats on the Altar have already been removed/repositioned to accommodate required spacing.
- Holy water fonts have been removed. We do have a limited number of plastic holy water bottles available for those who may want to bring holy water home with them.
- Restrooms will be supplied with sanitizers and toilet paper, and will be checked daily for resupply as needed.
- At least one Mass on the weekend will be livestreamed for the benefit of those who are abiding by “stay in place” or “self-quarantined” orders.
- What we are doing at St. Clare will be presented to the mayor and police chief to make sure we are adhering to local and state governments and health guidelines.

As we continue to receive further instructions, these will be published in the bulletin, on our Facebook page and on our church Website. These steps will not address every situation we encounter; suggestions and ideas are always welcomed. Please contact Fr. Jacob-Matthew or the Secretary’s Office with your suggestions.