



13 May 2020

Dear Parishioners of Our Lady of the Pillar,

After weeks of separation from our parish community, it is with great hope and joy that I welcome you back to Our Lady of the Pillar Parish!

Beginning on May 18, masses from Monday to Friday will be held in the parish church at 7:30 am. Weekend masses will be held on Saturdays at 5:00 pm and on Sundays at 7:00 am, 10:30 am and 5:00 pm in the Parish Life Center.

Of course, our return at this point will not be completely as it was before. These are not normal times, and our first priority is the health and safety as well as the spiritual care of our parishioners, volunteers and staff. While we all are eager to celebrate mass together again, we need to take into consideration those most vulnerable members of our community, including the elderly and those with chronic illnesses.

Archbishop Carlson has extended the obligation to attend Sunday mass until further notice. I want to encourage all those over 60 years of age and those with underlying health conditions to remain at home. We will continue to videotape or livestream the Sunday liturgy on our website.

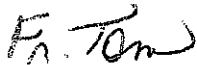
I am enclosing a summary of the guidelines for the reopening of churches promulgated by the Archdiocese of St. Louis. Please read them carefully and make every effort to adhere to them as faithfully as possible. In addition, I would like to mention a number of guidelines that are specifically pertinent to our parish:

- In the Parish Life Center, a team of coordinators will assist families and individuals with directing them to the seating area.
- Attendance at weekend liturgies may be limited to assure compliance with social distancing. All are encouraged to arrive on time. Once the limit has been reached, we are obliged to close the doors.
- All are obliged to wear a mask during the celebration of the mass except for the brief moment of receiving Holy Communion.

- Restrooms are to be used sparingly and, in the Parish Life Center, only by one or two individuals at a time.
- On weekdays, the church will remain open after the mass until 9:00 am. After that, it will be closed for cleaning and sanitizing.
- Unfortunately, the social component of our liturgies will need to be curtailed. The priests, deacon, or any other ministers will not be greeting parishioners either before or after mass. All are asked to enter and leave the worship area quickly and return to their cars.
- The parish offices will be closed until further notice. Arrangements for baptisms, marriages, funerals and the sacrament of reconciliation can be made by appointment.

I look forward to seeing you soon. As we all continue to struggle with this unique situation in our lives and in our history, let us take comfort in this wonderful Easter season and in the assurance that our God is always with us. In this month of Mary, let us call upon her to guide and strengthen us in the days ahead!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Tom". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Fr. Thomas French, S.M.
Pastor