



Annunciation Parish

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May 21, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

These have been trying times for all. There has been, and will continue to be, much illness, suffering and death due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. May no such suffering be in vain. As citizens, and conscientious members of society – taking seriously our call to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world – we have been asked to disrupt our lives, alter our routines, and make sacrifices. May it also be true that our sacrifices have been offered - and continue to be offered - in union with the One Sacrifice of Christ, for the healing of the nations.

As we all know, in the [Guidelines for the Resumption of Public Worship, Archdiocese of Cincinnati](#), permission to resume public Masses, as early as Monday, May 25th, has been given. Simultaneous with the possibility of resumption of public Masses, **the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass has been extended UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.** This, I believe, is recognition that the present health crisis will continue for some time, and that there is insufficient objective medical and scientific data to suggest we are returning to normal in the near future.

All who are vulnerable to exposure and infection, as well as being agents of transmission of the coronavirus, should exercise all reasonable caution, with regard to any public gathering and avail themselves of the dispensation. If the home is in truth the “Domestic Church,” stay at home and be Church. Keep Sunday holy in your homes. Annunciation Parish is committed to assisting you in [keeping Sunday holy](#).

For our Parish, I take our cue from the approach adopted by the [Archdiocese of Chicago](#). *“We must be honest,”* Blaise Cardinal Cupich, Archbishop of Chicago, writes. *“We expect this situation to continue for some weeks, and any plan for reopening our churches for public worship must include every precaution to ensure public gatherings do not create a second wave of contagion, thus squandering the gains made through our sacrifice in these days.”*

I am asking the same of you. Plans for reopening church MUST include every reasonable precaution. In the past few weeks, we have been blessed with the generosity of several parishioners who have come together as a COVID-19 Response Team, and have assisted me in determining what to do. The team includes Gary Brichler, Ron and Annie Hamilton, Susan Hoelle, Teresa Hoelle, Scott Provancher, Sarah Ronan, Beth Shaughnessy, and Robert Turner. They bring a wealth of knowledge and experience and common sense from their areas of expertise in the medical and corporate worlds; a wealth without which I would have no real ability to make an

informed decision. I wish to thank them all; I hope you are grateful for their service of us, as well. They are examples of what Church is called to be.

This team will continue to monitor the situation, convene regularly, and review and update our next steps as our community moves through phases of reopening during the next several weeks and months. I think this is something worth emphasizing. The response is not a matter of a one-time “fix,” but an ongoing, intelligent and responsible, phase-by-phase resumption of public worship for us. Again, our Response Team and I are referring to, and developing our response, following the logic and guidance provided by the Archdiocese of Chicago, as well as holding ourselves to the same standards of responsibility. We need time to do this as responsibly as possible. We know you understand and will cooperate with our plan, and prayerfully support it.

Together, let us live our Eucharistic faith, by seeking to protect and uphold the dignity of all human life, from first moment of conception through natural death, by moving forward responsibly and carefully. May Christ, the Physician of our Souls, assure our spiritual health that we may always know and do what is right for all.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Todd O. Grogan
Pastor

Enclosure (see below): Annunciation Plan for Phased Reopening