

St. Joseph's Parish
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June 12th, 2020

To my dear Parishioners. . . at last there is good news to be shared! It was officially announced by our dear Cardinal Collins on June 11, 2020.

Timeline regarding – re-opening of churches in the Archdiocese of Toronto
“In light of the government announcement of June 7, 2020 regarding the re-opening of places of worship, I would like to provide additional direction to all parishes on our re-opening timeline after consulting with the Council of Priests and Episcopal Board.

While the government has indicated that places of worship may open as of 12:01 a.m. on June 12, we recognize the extensive protocols that must be in place to safely re-open our churches. These include the training of clergy, staff and volunteers as well as ensuring appropriate cleaning supplies, signage and capacity control mechanisms can be prepared. Mindful that we are still in a period of pandemic, our goal is to ensure we can welcome the faithful and provide a safe environment for all.

Recognizing these challenges and balancing them with the understandable desire of the faithful to return to their spiritual home, I would ask all parishes to adopt the following timeline: opening churches for private prayer/adoration, moving to daily Mass for the public and finally returning to Sunday Masses throughout the archdiocese.

- **June 12 – 13, 2020** – period of preparation for parishes. Churches remain closed.
- **Sunday, June 14, 2020** – On the feast of Corpus Christi, parishes are asked to open their doors throughout the day for private prayer and adoration only.
- **Monday, June 15, 2020** – Churches *may* open for private prayer.
- **Tuesday, June 16, 2020** – Churches *may* open for private prayer.

- **Wednesday, June 17, 2020** – Churches *may* begin to celebrate daily Mass for the public. Please note the Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (June 19) and the Memorial of the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary (June 20)
- **Weekend of June 20/21, 2020** – weekend Masses may resume.”

Cardinal Collins continues. . . *“I continue to provide dispensation from the Sunday Mass for those who may not be able to attend for health reasons or due to capacity restrictions. St. Michael’s Cathedral will continue to livestream Masses – parishes may choose to do so for a period of time during this transition period or publicize the cathedral livestream, DailyTVMass.com as well as Masses offered through Salt & Light Catholic Television, EWTN and others.”*

Many of us have already followed the government’s restrictions, whenever we go out, remembering to stay 6 feet apart and whenever you can’t do this; you wear your mask to protect others. We will be following the same procedure in the church. Only the family of the same household (bubble) may sit together, whereas others must sit 6 feet apart. At St. Joseph’s Church we will be using for the present time *only one entrance* to the church that is the sacristy door, beside the rectory & parish office. The sacristy door will be open wide and inside on a table there will be hand sanitizer. More information regarding St. Anthony’s re-opening will be discussed next week. Everyone **MUST** use the sanitizer before entering the church. Even though the church is open, if you have a temperature or you are not feeling well, or you have a compromised immune system or you just don’t feel comfortable. . . please stay home. I would love to see you in the church, but as the saying goes; health is wealth and yours comes first!

This liturgy this weekend is the Solemnity of the Most Precious Body and Blood of our Lord (Corpus Christi) (Readings: Dt. 8: 2~3, 14~16, Corinthians 10: 16~17, & John 6: 51~59). A great philosopher and theologian St Thomas Aquinas is closely associated with the celebration of the feast of the Corpus Christi. When this feast was added to the calendar in 1264, Pope Urban IV asked St. Thomas Aquinas to write the liturgy for this feast.

Many of the hymns and customs associated with this feast are accredited to St. Thomas Aquinas. And in fact, we still sing the “Tantum Ergo” during the Benediction, which was composed by him.

For 2 ½ months many of you have been watching Mass on TV. But even though it was good, there was something lacking that was very important, that is, receiving the Holy Eucharist. It is our food of life that sustains us to live our Christian life. Today we shall meditate on the meaning and the merits of this great sacrament.

God is the Supreme Being. And all good things come from Him. We need His help and forgiveness. In the Old Testament there were four types of sacrifices offered to God, in order to give praise to Him and to ask His favours.

1. The sacrifice of peace
2. It was a sacrifice of thanksgiving
3. It was a sacrifice of expiation
4. It was a sacrifice of impetration, seeking God's aid and favour.

But the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross abolished all these Old Testament sacrifices. This one sacrifice of Jesus, which was the most perfect sacrifice, was sufficient to take away all our sins and procure for us God's aid.

All the seven sacraments which we celebrate, takes its source and power from the death of Jesus on the Cross. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass or the Eucharist, which we celebrate or participate, is nothing but re-enactment of the Passion, Death and the Resurrection of Christ. In the Eucharist, Jesus is truly and really present.

What are the merits of the Eucharist? Whenever we participate meaningfully and worthily in the Eucharist, which is the source and the summit of Christian life, we benefit immensely from it;

1. The Eucharist brings about our union with Christ. As Jesus said (Jn 6: 57) "He that eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him." And St. Paul writing to (Corinthians 6:54) says: "Because there is one bread, we who are many, are one body, for we all partake of one bread."
2. The Eucharist affects a certain delight in us. In receiving the Eucharist, there is a kind of heavenly bliss and joy.
3. The Eucharist forgives all venial sins. As good food energizes and makes us stronger to avert any diseases, so does the Eucharist. It strengthens our spiritual immune system, against the virus of sins.
4. The Eucharist grants us the Holy Spirit. In the third Canon of the Mass, the priest prays, "grant that we who are nourished by the body and blood of Christ may be filled with the Holy Spirit."
5. The Eucharist is the antidote to death. Jesus says in Jn. 6: 54, "He who eats my body and drinks my blood has eternal life and I will raise him on the last day."

Today in a very special way, we need to thank the Lord Jesus for this wonderful gift of the Eucharist. May our frequent participation and reception of the Eucharist lead us from untruth to truth, from darkness to light and from death to immortality?

Fr. Oswin
Pastor