

May 20, 2020

My dear Parishioners:

As you are aware, the Archbishop has announced that as of this weekend it would be possible in the Archdiocese to again have the celebration of Mass with the participation of a limited number of the faithful. Naturally, after two months of shut-down, this brought some hope and excitement.

On the diocesan website you may find the document containing all the directives and stipulations for the resumption of Masses with a congregation. I draw your attention to two of these:

1. The general dispensation from the Sunday Obligation remains in force, until further notice.
2. The decision to reopen for Masses with a limited congregation is left to the pastor's prudent judgement, taking into account the different circumstances of each parish: size of the church, space limitations, underlying health condition of the pastor, etc.

More detailed liturgical directives have also been given to the priests, for how they are to proceed in the celebration of Mass and the distribution of Communion at this time.

After considerable prayer and reflection, and after consultation with the Parish Pastoral Council, we have come to the decision that it is not possible for us to resume the public celebration of Mass at St. Michael's for the present time. The limitations of our church building, the recruitment of numerous volunteers, the procurement of the necessary sanitizing products, and especially the real risk posed to our vulnerable seniors, preclude the possibility, at least for now. Even if we were to resume, under the present conditions, with the maximum possible of six Sunday Masses, we would only be able to admit fewer than one quarter of those who normally attend. If you read all the requirements spelled out in the Archbishop's directive, you will better understand why we came to this decision.

Thanks to the generous service of our technical volunteers, we will continue the live-streaming of our daily and Sunday Masses.

This situation is a great cross for you, but also for your priests. Let us pray that it may be an occasion for deeper longing, and for growth in faith and love for Jesus and His Sacraments, until we are able to resume our common worship in safety.

Fr. Bernard Rossi
Pastor