May 15, 2020

Greetings of hope and peace,

I hope this letter finds you well. We wish we could return to Mass as it was before COVID-19, but unfortunately that cannot be. We are grateful to announce that we will be resuming the public celebration of Sunday and weekday liturgies beginning Wednesday May 20th.  While we are happy to be ending this time away from the Eucharist, there are several precautions that must be followed in accordance with state and diocesan guidelines. We do not want this deadly virus transmitted because of our actions. These precautions are being implemented out of love and concern for the safety of everyone attending liturgies at Saint Stephen Cathedral and Blessed Sacrament Chapel, including our priests and liturgical ministers.

**PLEASE READ AND FOLLOW THE NEW GUIDELINES FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF YOU AND OUR FELLOW WORSHIPERS.**

**Bishop Medley has extended the general dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Liturgy until further notice. Therefore, those who wish to participate in Mass *in person* may do so on any day of the week. Those who are sick must stay home. Those considered high risk and their caregivers are strongly encouraged to stay home. If you are vulnerable, or if you think there is a possibility that your family could present a risk to others who may be vulnerable, PLEASE do not attend.**

**PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING ADJUSTED MASS TIMES (St. Stephen)**

**Daily Mass: Monday-Friday 12:05 pm (beginning May 20)**

**Saturday 9:00 am (beginning May 30)**

**Saturday Vigil 5:00 pm Sunday 8:00 and 11:00 am**

**Blessed Sacrament Chapel 10:00 am Sunday.**

* + We will live stream the 5:00 pm Saturday Mass.
  + The church can be **NO MORE than 33% OCCUPIED**.
  + Please bring a face mask with you, as a FACE **MASK is REQUIRED** **for EVERYONE** and must be worn while in the building. If you are uncomfortable or if children are not mature enough to wear a mask, please refrain from attending.
  + We need to keep physical distancing of **six feet of separation** for congregants. Your cooperation will be appreciated. A family may be seated together.
  + Do not gather or congregate before or after the Mass. As you exit, please maintain physical distancing.
  + Hand sanitizer will be available at the doors of the church.
  + Our church will be cleaned after every Liturgy. No hymnals or materials will be available in the church or in the pews.
  + The Baptismal and Holy Water fonts will remain empty.
  + Offertory baskets will not be passed but collection baskets will be available at the doors. You may also consider mailing your contribution or using our WeShare online giving option available at [www.bllessedsacramentchapel.org](http://www.bllessedsacramentchapel.org)
  + The practice of the faithful receiving Holy Communion **ON THE TONGUE IS SUSPENDED** per diocesan mandates. The Precious Blood **will not be** offered to the faithful. Anyone who is uncomfortable with this type of reception can make a spiritual communion. Please maintain 6 feet of physical (roughly 2-3 pews) distancing in the communion line.
  + The Sign of Peace should be given without physical contact; a simple nod or wave is recommended. **do not hold hands** during the Our Father.
  + **SINGING IS NOT PERMITTED BY ANYONE EXCEPT THE CANTOR**, because singing can propel the virus.

Thank you for being patient and flexible as we adjust to the new guidelines. Our primary concern is the safety of all. We will keep you informed of changes as they are received from the diocese.

Easter Peace!