



St. John Catholic Church

Est. 1917

Dear all,

We are back in business!!! As you may have heard we will begin celebrating Mass open to the public!!! This will begin either next weekend (May 23/24) or the weekend after (May 30/31) depending on which parish you attend, as the city of Richmond has a slightly modified reopening schedule. I have much to tell you so I will get right to it.

You do not have to attend Mass if you are concerned or in a vulnerable category. Although public Mass is resuming, the obligation to attend is still lifted by the Bishop. We will be doing everything at the parish we can to keep you safe but your health is ultimately your responsibility.

The livestream will still occur but the time of the livestream will change. Mass will be livestreamed at 9am beginning next weekend. But you may always watch the recording later.

St John will be starting Mass (because they are in Henrico) May 23/24. St Patrick and St Peter will start Mass (because they are in Richmond) May 30/31.

Mass times remain the same EXCEPT for St Peter. Mass times for St Peter will be 8:30am and 11:30am to give us extra time to clean between Masses. This is a requirement by the diocese that all Masses be at least 3 hours apart. The parishes will be disinfected between all Masses.

There will be a few changes to the way we worship on Sunday. They may be a little inconvenient but we will get through it. Catholics have gone through much much worse in order to go to Mass, including celebrating Mass in catacombs in Rome when it was illegal to go to Mass and punishable by death, celebrating Mass on the back of Jeeps before marching into battle, and even currently there are places where Christians gather to worship in basements for fear of persecution by the government. Others have had it much worse, so when we are tempted to complain we should remember how good we have it, even through things may be a little inconvenient for a time.

First, you must arrive 30 minutes early. This will give you time to get through the health screening before entering the building.

All will enter through one main door, single file, and will be given a health screening by being asked three questions: have you or anyone in your household had a fever in the past 2 weeks?; do you or anyone in your household have a new cough or new shortness of breath?; have you come into contact with anyone who is positive with COVID19 in the past two weeks?. If you answer yes to any of these questions you cannot enter the building.

All will be required to wear a mask at Mass (all 3 years old and up). You have to keep the mask on during Mass and may only remove to receive Holy Communion. The church does not provide masks. Any mask is fine.

The church has limited capacity due to the social distancing requirements and once full, all others will not be able to come in the building. We are blessed to have large buildings with many pews so this should not cause as serious of a problem as in other parishes.

An usher will direct you where to sit as all will be seated 6 feet apart (except for families as they will be seated together).

You are to remain six feet apart at all times.

There will be no singing at least for a time.

When you go up for Holy Communion, you will go up single file. You will approach the priest, receive Holy Communion, move to the side, remove your mask and then consume the Host. Then you will put your mask back on and return to your pew.

You will remain in your pew after Mass and will be dismissed from Mass single file by an usher.

All bathrooms will be single use. It is best if you go before you arrive.

There will be no socializing in the commons before or after Mass.

Mass will feel a little different but remember it is not all about the feelings. More importantly it is about Christ offering Himself for the forgiveness of our sins which occurs at each Mass and the ability to consume His Body and Blood that He generously shares with us.

We your priests look forward to being with you again!!! God is so good!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

If you have any questions or need anything, please let us know. See you soon!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rev. Fr. Rossi".

Fr Rossi