

Dear Friends in the Lord,

In my estimation, bulletin articles are one of the most effective means of communicating important information about parish events, offering instruction about Catholic teaching, and providing reflections on various topics. For this reason, I will take opportunity to compose a weekly bulletin article for your information, formation, and prayerful consideration, which you will find in this space each week.

For my first bulletin article at St. Mary Parish, I want to alert you to changes in Covid-19 protocols when we gather for Mass on Saturday evening and Sunday morning. The following adaptations are in accord with guidelines issued by the Worship Commission of the Diocese of Gary and recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Effective July 17, 2021, St. Mary Parish will:

- Return to the pre-covid-19 Mass schedule on Sunday with Masses offered at 7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM, 12:00 PM. Mass on Saturday evening will remain at 4:30 PM.
- Resume the custom of singing at Mass.
- Offer weekly celebration of the Sacrament of Penance on Saturday afternoon from 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM. More opportunities for the celebration of confession will be added soon.
- Discontinue the practice of Mass reservations.
- Discontinue the practice of social distance between pews.
- Disinfect pews after Mass on Monday morning and Friday morning.

In light of the increased number of people in our small church and for the protection of everyone in the church, the team concurred that continued use of masks is necessary. While this may be challenging for some of you, please know that we are acting in the best interest of everyone who comes to St. Mary Parish for Mass on Sunday. Mass at 9:00 AM on Sundays will continue to be live-streamed each week for those who have concerns about participating in public worship.

I want to thank the St. Mary Parish Covid-19 Re-entry Team for their guidance, consultation, and support, namely, Mary Eileen McCormack, Patty Miskus Marian Weeks, Jan Mucha, Sr. Joanne Marie Schutz, and Deacon Dan Lowery. With them, I encourage you to return to Mass on Sunday, renew your relationship with the Lord, and renew your relationship with one another. I look forward to welcoming you and praying with you, too. In the meantime, please be sure of my prayers for you and those whom you love.

Faithfully yours in the Lord,

*Fr. Kevin Huber*

Pastor