

May 6, 2020

Dear parishioners,

Our deepest desire at St. Joseph's is for all to be able to attend Mass and receive the Eucharist at least once per week. Given the circumstances, some adjustments must be made in order to keep all safe and to comply with the governor's directives. We understand this is a difficult time, but it is also an opportunity to better practice our faith in a loving and charitable way.

Bishop Vasquez has suggested the following: "...knowing that it will not be possible for all people to come to Mass on Sundays as we begin reopening, I ask that the faithful be patient and consider attending on a different day of the week. We are still limited in our ability to fully congregate but it is important to me that the faithful have access to the Eucharist and Confession."

At St. Joseph's our temporary capacity of 25% is limited to 50 people in the congregation per Mass.

**The upcoming weekend of May 9 and 10, the following schedule will be:**

- Saturday, May 9 at 5 p.m. in English (also live streamed)
- Saturday, May 9 at 7 p.m. in Spanish (also live streamed)
- Sunday, May 10 at 9 a.m. in English
- Sunday, May 10 at 11:15 a.m. in Spanish

**Daily Mass will take place in the main church. The daily Mass schedule will be:**

- Monday – Thursday at 8 a.m. in English
- Thursday at 6 p.m. in Spanish
- Friday at 12:15 p.m. in English

**The following temporary protocols will be utilized:**

- Everyone is encouraged to wear a face mask / covering during the liturgy
- Everyone entering the sanctuary will receive hand sanitizer by the ushers
- Six foot of distance between each other at all times except between members of the same family or household
- Ushers will be issuing directions for entering and exiting the church and how congregants are to receive Communion
- Sunday offerings should be placed in the Donation Box in the narthex before entering the church (collection baskets will NOT be passed during Masses). Online donations are accepted as well. Please go to our website: [www.stjosephrockdale.org](http://www.stjosephrockdale.org) You may also mail in your donations to: P. O. Box 548, Rockdale, TX 76567
- The Bishop is advising and encouraging the following parishioners to ***not*** attend Mass and to remain at home:
  1. those who are sick
  2. those who are 65 years or older
  3. those who have been advised by health care workers or caregivers
  4. those who sincerely believe that attending Mass will jeopardize their health or the health of a person whom they reside
  5. those who sincerely believe that because of the limitations imposed by the temporary protocols attending Mass is not reasonable

Understanding all of the above, we still believe in your prudent and right judgment as to whether or not to attend Mass. If you fall in one of the above categories, please consider attending a weekday Mass. Some of our fellow parishioners are not able to attend weekday Masses, so we are encouraging as many of you as possible to come celebrate the Mass during the week.

We do not want to turn away any of our parishioners, but once we reach 25% capacity (50 people) the church doors will be closed. As a St. Joseph community, we want to remain united in Christ through the celebration of the Mass – whether that means inside or outside (live streaming) of the Church.

