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Dear St. Joseph Parish Family,

Our separation as a church family since the 5th Sunday of Lent has given a new meaning to the word, “sacrifice.” You have sacrificed and fasted from the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, from being in the Real Presence of our Lord, from the joy of sharing the space and beauty of our church, and from one another. For your patience and support through all of this, I thank you. I am so honored to be your Pastor.

My planning team has been working diligently developing procedures, restrictions and guidelines according to the Bishop’s directives, and the CDC and local and national mandates so that we can begin to publicly celebrate the Sacraments again. This is a monumental task and it will be evolving each week as we learn by trial and error. **The protection and safety of all life is of the utmost importance.** Your life, your fellow parishioners’ lives, and the lives of your priests must be protected. It may seem difficult and challenging. To some, annoying. We must do all that we can to help stop the spread of this serious and deadly virus, and to protect people’s lives, especially those most vulnerable so that there will not be a resurgence of cases and deaths causing us to close down again.

Beginning on Wednesday, May 13, the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima, we will resume public daily Mass @ 7:30 a.m., and live streaming of the daily Mass will continue @ noon. As we ease back into the celebration of Mass with much caution, the daily and Sunday Masses will be in the gym so as to allow for as many parishioners as possible to attend, and to maintain the 6 ft. social distancing. The church will be opened after the public daily Mass for private prayer until 3 p.m. The 10:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday will be live streamed from the church sanctuary, so that those who choose to remain isolated may still participate in Mass, but the church will remain closed for that Mass.

Please remember also that there is no moral duty or canonical obligation to attend Sunday Mass for as long as this pandemic is a threat to our health. As much as we love and miss receiving the Eucharist, the dispensation from the Bishop is still in effect until further notice. Let safety and prudence be your guide.

Attached you will find information on how Mass will be celebrated, as there are many guidelines that need to be followed. We have also included a map of the gym to indicate entering and exiting for Communion, and information to help guide your decision to attend Mass in person or continue to participate via live streaming and broadcasting.

God Bless you, and thank you for your love, care, concern, and prayers for the Church, one another and us, your priests, and for supporting all of our efforts with patience, love and understanding.

With Many Thanks and Prayers,

Monsignor Harris