

Dear brothers and sisters,

Greetings in Christ!

I trust you are doing well and staying healthy in these challenging times.

As you know, our church has faced tremendous challenges over the past months as we have done our best to navigate the pandemic. Doubtless, all the decisions we've made have not been perfect, but we have tried to seek the mind of God and sought His wisdom.

As we have returned to worship together, again, we've tried to do so with a sense of care while striving to gain some semblance of "normalcy." We often hear that people can't wait to "get back to normal." I heard someone say at one point though, that "normal is just a setting on the dryer."

My goal, and the goal of our Re-opening Committee, has always been to do our best to provide an atmosphere where people are welcomed and safe. Where we have not done that, we apologize for falling short of our goal.

Now that restrictions have been lifted, we believe that we can safely open up all pews in our Main Church and East Wing. Fully vaccinated members will no longer be required to wear masks in the Main Church and the East Wing. It is certainly acceptable to continue wearing face masks since we will all be in a closed space for a significant period of time with many people. You may also want to wear a face covering if you are still concerned about your own vulnerability or the vulnerability of others, especially young children.

We ask that the ENTIRE pew be used for seating - not just the end seats. The last 2 weekends have seen people being brought into Deacon John Hall as 'overflow' while there were large gaps in the center of pews. Please fill in the entire pew now that we can.

Deacon John Hall will still require masks (except for children 12 or under) so that there is a place for those of us who prefer to be only with people wearing masks. Chairs can be arranged in Deacon John Hall at the convenience of those of us who still prefer more social distancing; families can more easily sit together at a distance from others if they wish.

We will continue to live stream our masses.

Some limitations will remain: holy water will not be available; we will still not receive the Blood of Christ; we will not have processions at the beginning or end of Mass; hymns will be limited to two verses; there will not be music as the gifts are prepared nor will there be a presentation of gifts; your weekly contributions may still be left in the temporary boxes; we will continue having only one Mass on Sunday and one on

Saturday until our numbers indicate that a second Sunday Mass is needed (there is plenty of seating available at our Saturday Mass); only the East Wing door and the Hall door will be unlocked for entrance.

We are obviously a church that loves to sing our prayers and we've proven that the last two weekends! As we enter this new phase of 'normality', let us sing with great joy and gratitude! And let us also pray for the brothers and sisters we have lost as a result of this pandemic, as well as for those who are still suffering. \

Your brother in Christ,

Fr. Sean, O.Carm.