



2212 McDonough St.  
Joliet, IL 60436

May 22, 2020

### **St. Jude Parish Reopening Plan amid COVID-19**

Hello St. Jude family,

I pray that you and your loved ones are healthy. As you may have seen, Bishop Richard Pates, recently shared our multi-phased plan for reopening churches in the Diocese of Joliet.

Specifically,

- Phase I allows for parishes to reopen for Baptism, Reconciliation, Weddings and Funerals with a limit of TEN attendees.
- Phase IA allows for parishes to reopen for private prayer and adoration with a limit of TEN attendees.
- Phase II allows for reopening for weekday and weekend Masses for larger groups depending on the guidelines which will be issued by the State of Illinois at a later date, and the capacity of the church building

#### **Our St. Jude Reopening Plan and Timing**

First and foremost, please know that the Plan for Reopening was given by the Diocese to prioritize the safety and wellbeing of all while maintaining due respect and reverence for the sacraments and liturgical norms of our faith.

As instructed by the Diocese, I have assembled a Parish Reopening Leadership Team with parishioner co-captains to lead our efforts. We have participated in required training from the Diocese to ensure that our parish reopening plan conforms to the guidelines developed by the Diocese in collaboration with civil and healthcare authorities. Also, we have started to assemble protective and cleaning supplies, as well as guidance on purchasing/maintaining supplies ongoing.

The Parish Reopening Leadership Team and I have submitted documentation of our parish plan as part of the “reopening certification process” and are awaiting approval from the Diocese. **We hope to move into Phase 1 of the reopening process the weekend of May 30th.** This would allow us to return to the celebration of Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals, to open for Confession and private prayer in the church and Eucharistic Adoration in the chapel. Within Phase 1, we would still be limited to 10 attendees. Currently, we are arranging an online sign-up system for volunteering and for Eucharistic Adoration and will be in touch next week with further details.

Due to the limited capacity of our church, The Parish Reopening Leadership Team and I have determined that when we are able to move into Phase 2, it would be best for our parish to hold Mass



in the gym. The gym would provide enough space for all of our parish family to come together in worship each week. We could accommodate the amount of people of our regular weekend Mass attendance, while still successfully maintaining the 6 ft. social distancing guidelines. We do not yet have a definite date for when we will be able to transition into Phase 2 to reopen for weekday and weekend Masses.

### **Volunteers Needed**

We will need volunteers to assist with our parish reopening plan. Importantly, leadership team members and volunteers must not be part of a “vulnerable population” (no underlying medical condition such as diabetes; lung disease; undergoing cancer treatment, etc.) Those over the age of 60 should consult with the Parish Leadership Team about possibly serving as a volunteer. I ask all of you who are younger than 60 and healthy with no underlying health conditions to consider assisting with one of three reopening teams. I especially encourage high school, college students as well as young adults serve and volunteer for teams.

- **Set-up team.** Sample duties include ensuring that all supplies needed for each sacramental celebration/gathering are ready for use, entrances and exits are marked and propped physically open prior to attendees’ arrival/departure, windows are opened, etc.
- **Greeting team.** Sample duties include assisting in managing the flow of congregants as they enter the church, making sure attendees use hand sanitizer upon entering, are wearing a mask, and are reminded not to enter if ill; directing people to appropriate seating/waiting areas, etc.
- **Cleaning team.** Sample duties include maintaining and cleaning essential and trafficked areas of the church before and after the church has been used. Masks and gloves will be provided, if you do not have your own, in addition to approved cleaning/disinfecting supplies.

The Leadership Team and I will make sure that all volunteers are properly trained. Please send a message to us at [re@stjudejoliet.net](mailto:re@stjudejoliet.net) to indicate your willingness and ability to volunteer.

May God grant you His peace during this difficult time and may you feel his loving presence. If you have any questions, please call the rectory at 815-725-2209.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Fr. Michael Lane".

Fr. Michael Lane, Pastor