

**Saint Francis and Saint Ambrose Roman Catholic Parishes
P.O. Box 216
Saint Paul, Kansas 66771
620-449-2224**

May 1, 2021
Feast of Saint Joseph the Worker

Dear brothers and sisters of Saint Ambrose and Saint Francis Parishes:

First, I thank you for your patience and understanding in your observance of safety guidelines from our Bishop at Holy Mass and other liturgical celebrations during this Pandemic. At times, I have quite frankly, felt like a security officer in ensuring our strict observance, especially to the rule of six foot distancing in the pews and communion lines and supporting the Bishop in his strong encouragement of the wearing of face masks on church premises. If I have offended anyone in my efforts to keep you all safe, again, I beg pardon! I remain grateful for Bishop Kemme and his guidance as our Shepherd during this difficult time and for your patient understanding as well.

Enclosed with this letter is another from Bishop Kemme. In it he explains he is lifting the general dispensation from the obligation to attend Holy Mass Saturday evening and Sundays, as well as Holy Days of Obligation, beginning the weekend of June 5-6, 2021 (the Feast of Corpus Christi). That means that from that weekend onward, all laity, unless receiving a dispensation or permission directly from the pastor to not attend for just health concerns, will resume the "Sunday Obligation".

This is good! However, it poses continued challenges. Our former or "normal" weekend schedule will resume on the weekend of June 5-6, 2021! That is to say, Saturday evening Mass at Saint Francis at 5:30, 8:00 Sunday morning Mass at Saint Ambrose, and 10:00 Sunday morning Mass at Saint Francis. One side of each church building will remain socially-distanced seating, with every other row of pews roped or taped off and horizontal distancing provided. Hymnals will be returned to the pews in each parish church. It is my hope to resume having Altar Servers, Sacristans and the Offertory Procession (gifts being brought up by assigned couples and families), Ushers taking up your offering of treasure in the Offertory Collection as before, and Liturgical Music Ministry to return to "normal" on the weekend of June 5-6, 2021.

With seating at a premium at Saint Ambrose, I beg only parishioners of Saint Ambrose attend their 8:00a.m. Mass until we can eventually remove all distancing in both churches. Please, please, parishioners of Saint Francis attend either the 5:30 Saturday evening Mass at Saint Francis or the 10:00 Sunday morning Mass at Saint Francis during this transition. In other words, let's make sure that the people of Saint Ambrose can get into their own church for Sunday 8:00a.m. Mass!

The Saint Ambrose church will not have to be sanitized, as there is only one weekend Mass and no other until Thursday mornings. However, the ushers at Saint Francis must continue to sanitize pews after both weekend Masses for the time being. I am most grateful to our ushers at Saint Francis...just be patient and keep sanitizing, taking care to not mist the hymnals in the pews and causing them damage, please, ushers.

Affecting Saint Ambrose Church only, will be the permanent removal of the bowl and tongs formerly used for you to place your own host in as you entered Saint Ambrose Church, if receiving Holy Communion. I will take care of this in both parishes myself by putting the number of hosts needed for each Mass in the Ciborium for the Sacristans to place on the Offertory Gift tables with the wine.

Use of either parish hall remains restricted to funeral dinners only and only for immediate family members of the deceased in either parish hall with the meals provided or catered by the family of the deceased. Funeral dinner families will be required to clean the hall afterwards.

Wearing of face masks by me and Extra-ordinary ministers of Holy Communion at the time of Holy Communion will still be required, as will masks for Servers; and I join Bishop in encouraging the use of face masks inside our churches in general.

Confessions will continue to be offered at Saint Francis parish at the west end of the rectory on Saturdays from 3:00p.m. to 4:00p.m., for the time being.

Yours with love and gratitude to God for each of you, and for His helping us through this turmoil, in Jesus, with Mary and Joseph, I remain,



Father Sam Pinkerton
Pastor