



St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

Making Christ the Center of Our Lives

March 13, 2020

LITURGY PLANS FOR ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST IN LIGHT OF COVID-19

Dear Friends,

In compliance with the temporary prohibition on non-essential gatherings of people of more than 250 people in one room or a single space at the same time, including churches, given by Governor Eric Holcomb, and to do everything we can to prevent the spread of infectious disease, St. John the Baptist will observe the following protocols at our liturgies until further notice:

- Bishop Rhoades has dispensed all Catholics in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass, beginning the weekend of March 15 and continuing through March 29. Televised Mass may be seen on WFFT TV, FOX Ch. 55 at 10:30 a.m. Sunday morning. Cable: Frontier Ch. 5 and Comcast Ch. 12. Anyone who is sick should remain at home. The elderly are encouraged to do likewise.
- **St. John the Baptist will still keep our regular public Mass schedule (Sat, 4:30PM; Sun, 8 & 10:30AM). Up to 250 people will be allowed in the church. Any overflow crowd will be sent to the school gym (PAC) where Mass will be offered if necessary at the usual time.**
- To guarantee we are not exceeding the 250 limit, please observe the signs at the ends of the pews that indicate a maximum of 4 or 3 people per pew. If you're a family of more than 4 people, please feel free to use as many pews as necessary.
- The distribution of the Precious Blood remains suspended with the exception of one parishioner who receives from a dedicated chalice due to celiac disease. Remember that the whole Christ, that is, His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity, is present when only the Host is received.
- Extraordinary ministers of holy communion will use hand sanitizer found on the communion rail prior to the distribution of Holy Communion. The presiding priest will also sanitize his hands.

- The priests and MCs responsible for preparing the bread, wine and vessels will thoroughly wash their hands before doing so. They will likewise thoroughly clean the vessels with hot, soapy water after each Mass. This has always been our practice.
- Antibacterial soap may be found in all our bathrooms for those who wish to use it. There is one bathroom in the main vestibule, men's and women's bathroom in the church basement at the bottom of the main vestibule stairs and a unisex bathroom in the church basement at the bottom of the stairwell to the right of the St. Joseph Altar.
- The sign of peace is suspended.
- All are asked to refrain from holding hands during the Our Father.
- All Holy Water fonts and the baptismal font will be emptied. If you wish to bring water from home to be blessed, one of the priests will be happy to do so after Mass. Baptisms will make use of fresh water and a thoroughly cleansed font.
- We will discontinue the use of hymnals and missalettes. You are encouraged to sing the responsorial psalm and hymn refrains familiar to you with gusto!
- We will discontinue the use of passing around collection baskets from hand to hand. Ushers in the church will use the collection baskets on long handles, wearing gloves and washing their hands immediately after. Money counters will likewise wear gloves. Remember that Online Giving is an option available to you as well and can be found at stjohnsfw.org.
- Please take a bulletin from the bulletin racks next to the doors as ushers will not hand them out.
- The interior doors of the church will remain propped open and ushers and greeters will help with opening the exterior doors.
- Please contact the parish office at 260-744-4393 to let us know of anyone who is sick so that our priests may minister to them.

Additional information such as general preventative measures apart from our parish life may be found on our website at stjohnsfw.org.

Your Pastor,



Fr. Andrew