



Dear Parishioners,

**This past weekend, St. Andrew Church opened for public Sunday masses for the first time since March 22.** How wonderful it was to celebrate Sunday Mass with priests and people together! Of course, attendance was small, as it should be and as I expected it to be. Our doors were wide open so no one had to touch the door handles to enter. There were about 60 people in attendance at the 4:30 p.m. vigil Mass; 85 at the 7:30 a.m. Mass, 90 at the 9:15 a.m. Mass, and 115 at the 11 a.m. Mass. (These numbers do not include the chipmunks and squirrels that came into the church through the open doors!) Everyone wore masks and sat in the designated pews, observed social distancing and nobody complained about it. Surfaces were sanitized between Masses. Everything went smoothly. I was very pleased and relieved, and I hope this pattern continues in the weeks ahead. Those who are at higher risk for illness should continue to be very cautious about returning to Mass--or any gathering for that matter. But I believe that little by little, more and more will be coming to church and our congregation will swell.

**I am happy to inform you that our RCIA catechumens and candidates will at long last receive the Sacraments of Initiation next weekend.** This usually takes place at the Easter Vigil, but of course, it had to be postponed because no public Masses were allowed at that time. I look forward to welcoming these eight new Catholics to the communion of the Church.

While we have successfully resumed public masses at St. Andrew, **we are not yet resuming other in-person parish activities or group meetings or opening other facilities like the parish hall or the Bryce Eck Center.** That will come in due time. We will resume regular Saturday Confessions next Saturday (June 13) from 3:15 to 4:15 p.m. There are some modifications, however. Confessions will take place in the Chapel because the confessional is too confining for proper social distancing. Only one priest will be available. Those waiting in line must remain 6 feet from others in the line. This will be one more small step in the direction of normal.

**This past week has been eventful in our community and our nation, as protests have erupted on our streets demanding justice and an end to racism.** The senseless and unjustifiable death of George Floyd in Minneapolis horrifies and offends the conscience of all good people. The indignation, outrage, and demands for societal change voiced by protesters are reasonable, understandable, and must be heeded. **One of the most basic Catholic moral principles on which all of the Catholic moral theology and social justice doctrine is based is the dignity of the human person and the respect for all human life. Racism is contrary to these basic principles and must be opposed.** In my homily on Pentecost Sunday, I stated that the Holy Spirit prompts us to speak the Good News, and that cries for Justice and Peace are likewise prompted by the Holy Spirit. I also said that ignorant, hateful, belligerent, insulting, and incendiary speech does not come from the Holy Spirit but rather from the Evil One. I believe every follower of Jesus must be in solidarity with those who seek and demand racial justice, who confront oppression and who seek reform of racist social structures. At the same time, those same Catholic moral principles impel us to promote peace, to oppose violence, and to denounce the unjustified and immoral infliction of injury and destruction of property. May the Holy Spirit enable the Church to speak prophetically in these times by courageously proclaiming the dignity of every human person and the sanctity of every human life.

Your Pastor,  
Msgr. Stephan Moloney