

PASTOR'S UPDATE TO PARISHIONERS – AA (6/10/20)

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PASTORAL MESSAGE TO PARISHIONERS FROM FR. FERGUSON

Greetings in the Lord!

This weekend we conclude a special series of Solemnities celebrated by the Universal Church which help us to take joy in our faith: this weekend is the **Solemnity of Corpus Christi (Body and Blood of Christ)**. This weekend's Solemnity helps us to appreciate and give thanks for the truth which defines our Catholic faith: that Jesus our Lord is truly present to us in the most powerful way possible on this side of Heaven in the Real Presence of His Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist. As I explain to our 2nd grade First Communicants, the Eucharist (and the Mass) is a miraculous and mind-blowing way by which we are able to experience Jesus' love for us in three ways: 1) taking us back in time to the foot of the Cross of His Sacrifice, 2) taking us forward in time to the joys of the eternal Wedding Feast of the Lamb of Heaven as at a banquet, and 3) assuring us in the "here and now" that Jesus is always with us in His loving Presence each and every day, no matter the challenges we endure. What a great Solemnity we will celebrate this weekend which highlights all these forms of God's love in the greatest of all the Sacraments! Please see below for ways to participate in our local liturgies in honor of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Since our last Update was labelled "Z", I was contemplating moving on to the Greek alphabet, in honor of the language of the Bible. But since it is rather a bit difficult to remember whether "rho" comes before or after "epsilon" or "psi" (and thus whether or not we might have "missed" an Update), I ultimately discerned it might be best to "start over" and move on to "AA"!

Today's "UPDATE – AA" includes material to help us prepare for this weekend's Masses, whether you are able to come "on-site" or must remain at home. **If you come "so-site", please plan to wear a face covering per the directives of Bishop Brennan.** (We have a few extra masks in the narthex if you forget to bring one). I re-post **some important reminders for those who come on-site for Masses.**

We also have a special message from your next Pastor, and several parish activities in the works.

Our Mother Mary, Patron of our Hardin County Parishes, Pray for Us.

- Fr. Bill Ferguson, Pastor

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR NEXT PASTOR

As most of you know by now, last weekend, Bishop Brennan announced that our next pastor of our Hardin County parishes will be Fr. Edward Shikina, who is currently Parochial Vicar (Associate Pastor) of St. Brendan parish in Hilliard (the west side of Columbus). Fr. Shikina and I have spoken several times in the last few days, and he is eager to start his service to all of you in less than five weeks – on Tuesday 14 July. Below is a special message that he wants to share with you all. He also hopes to film a video message in the coming days, which I will post in a future Update.

From Fr. Shikina:

Dear brothers and sisters of Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Lourdes parishes:

It is my joy to become your next pastor and am looking forward to being with you. I was surprised when Bishop Brennan asked me to become a pastor after only two years of being a priest. Some have said to me that it is a great accomplishment, but I think the Bishop is confident that through a culture of collaboration we can all work together in building up the kingdom of heaven. I think this is evident in that two others of my classmates, 3 out of the 5 of us, have also been named pastors. That is unusual. It is that spirit of collaboration that I want to bring to the two parishes. Our goal is our salvation and my role is simply to lead you there and into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. So I look forward to working together with you towards that goal. I will write later to tell you more about who I am. In the meantime, I am thankful to your current pastor, Fr. Bill Ferguson, for continuing to lead you and for helping this transition to go well. I am praying for you and ask for your prayers as well.

May God bless you!

Fr. Ed Shikina

BOTH PARISHES: 40-HOUR ADORATION THIS WEEKEND

In honor of the Solemnity of Corpus Christi (this Sunday, June 14), there was a parishioner-generated initiative to offer what is known as a “Forty-Hour Devotion” consisting of 40 hours of Eucharistic Adoration leading up to the Sunday Morning Mass of the Solemnity. This will be open to both parishes of Hardin County and will be physically hosted at Our Lady of Lourdes.

In this centuries-old devotion, adoration is held continuously for 40 hours, around the clock. **Our cluster’s will start at 6:00 pm on Friday, June 12, and continue until Sunday, June 14, concluding immediately before the Ada Mass at 11:00 am.** Many parishioners from both OLL and ICC have already signed up to keep vigil with our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. However, all are welcome to spend some time in prayer. After three months of separation from church and the sacraments, a team of parishioners put this spiritual devotion together to revitalize the sacramental and spiritual life of our parishes. Bishop Brennan called for parishes to hold this very devotion in his recent Facebook Live event.

In addition to adoration, we will be praying the ‘**Liturgy of the Hours**’ at four times during the devotion: Friday, June 12, at 6:00 pm (Vespers = Evening Prayer); Saturday, June 13, at 7:00 am (Lauds = Morning Prayer) and 6:00 pm (Vespers); and Sunday, June 14, at 7:00 am (Lauds). The ancient “Liturgy of the Hours” has been done for centuries by members of the Church and is the daily prayer and liturgy of the Church which sanctifies the day and gives thanks and praise to God. There will be worship aids (to be taken home by the users immediately afterwards for sanitation’s sake) for those who are interested in joining or just coming to see what this liturgy is. All this will take place at Our Lady of Lourdes in Ada, but with parishioners from both parishes participation.

A **flyer** telling more about this devotion is **attached**.

If you would like to sign up for one or more “hours” of Adoration, or if you have any questions, please contact Chris Spiese (christopher.spiese@gmail.com). Even if you don’t sign up, **ALL ARE WELCOME TO COME DURING THE DAY (8 am to 8 pm, when the doors will be kept unlocked), FOR ADORATION AND ESPECIALLY FOR THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS!**

BOTH PARISHES: MISSION APPEAL THIS WEEKEND

COVID changes everything. This coming weekend would have been the weekend to welcome our annual Mission Speaker, telling us about the needs of our fellow Catholics around the world. But because, of COVID, our Mission Speaker will not be able to be with us on-site. However, the Diocese of Columbus has directed us to still learn about the mission group who would have come, and to take up a second collection for their support.

As I will explain more this weekend, our designated mission group this year is the “Diocese of Moshi, Tanzania” in East Africa. Evangelized years ago by Holy Ghost missionaries, the indigenous clergy and lay people continue the work of spreading the Gospel and serving their communities, but must do so in very difficult circumstances, including running schools, orphanages, hospitals, and vocational training centers.

I will share more about the needs of the Diocese of Moshi this weekend. Please be generous in your support of our fellow disciples around the world!

KENTON – FESTIVAL UPDATE

This past Monday, the Festival Committee, led by Dr. Kate Johnson, met to discuss how to go about our annual one-day August parish festival this year given the limitations and circumstances of “re-opening” from COVID.

Based on the current limits on crowd size allowed by the State of Ohio (which is higher than what we normally would ever have at any given time during the Festival), and since the Diocese has not issued any specific directives about such events, each of the members of the Committee shared their thoughts on what we could or should do. The consensus of the members was to offer a very “simplified” festival, which would focus on a few specific events and activities, especially those which can be more easily monitored or controlled for social distancing and sanitation. For example, the chicken dinner (which will have a “set” menu with fewer options; no donated homemade food allowed) would be served as an outdoor “to go” affair rather than an indoor “sit down” version, so that people can take it home or sit outside spaced apart, for better ventilation than being indoors. Also, the Theme Baskets could be placed in a well-controlled-access area to limit the number of people who are in the area to look over the baskets. The same thing could be easily arranged for the Country Store. What we will be discouraging is the “congregating” of people milling around outside, so as a consequence, will not have such things as the special concessions. Also, because of sanitizing requirements, we will not be able to have most of the children’s games that we have had in the past. We are also reducing the hours of the Festival, so that it will occur only from Noon until 7:00 pm.

This consensus of the Committee seems to address several priorities and concerns: on the one hand, it was thought that cancelling the August Festival altogether would be tough on the sense of community within the parish (many need to have a chance to “re-connect” after being apart for so long); but on the other hand, keeping things simplified and “socially-distant” will address the obvious need to create a safe and sanitary environment for everyone’s health. And of course, we will need to emphasize that no one is expected to attend, and in fact should NOT attend if they have any symptoms of concern. The hope also is that by August (two months away), the COVID concern will be further diminished, especially given the heat of the summer.

The members of the Committee all agreed that doing things in a sanitary manner will be of utmost importance. A lot of discussion took place regarding this topic: how to keep things clean and sanitized, and there will be a specific “team” serving that day to circulate around the grounds to do just that.

So.....with the decision to cautiously go ahead, the Committee said they would like for me to make some appeals for help:

- We need donations toward the Chicken Dinner
- We need items donated for the Theme Baskets
- We need items donated for the Country Store
- We **WILL NOT** be taking **ANY** homemade food donations for the dinner or the cake wheel

To drop off donations, please contact Kathy Klingelhofer at the office to arrange a time (since staff are still on a limited on-site schedule) by calling the office at 419-675-1162. **For other questions or to get involved with the planning or volunteering**, feel free to contact Kate Johnson at 567-674-8533. Thank you!

KENTON – VOICEMAIL SYSTEM

There's never a dull moment in running a parish. My apologies to the parishioners of Immaculate Conception regarding our voicemail system. It came to our attention a couple of weeks ago that our (very antiquated) voicemail system apparently had a mysterious "general mailbox" (in addition to our normally-used extensions) that no one ever knew about, which was misplacing several messages that callers were leaving over the past several years.

Because of the obvious serious pastoral consequences of this (which is unfortunately how this came to my attention recently), along with what I am told is a long, difficult history of trying to program the system, I have decided to bomb our voicemail system entirely and do a complete overhaul. I have consulted with the Diocesan Office of Information Technology, who are busy contacting companies as we speak to provide us estimates. I have also submitted a grant application to the Catholic Foundation to help with the costs of installing the new system (they are all quite expensive, especially now that most are "cloud-based" and require full-campus internet accessibility).

Hopefully, we can soon get a modern, reliable system in place which will help us to respond to ALL pastoral requests in a timely manner, as parishioners deserve. Until we can get the new system in place, please be aware that when calling in and leaving messages on the current system, please select one of the actual mailboxes which are mentioned; do not "stay on the line" and leave a message in the "general" mailbox.

Again, my sincere apologies to anyone who has left messages and wondered why "Father never responded to me!" I take all pastoral requests seriously, and I commit to replying to people promptly. If there's ever any doubt about whether a message was received, feel free to contact me at my alternate number of 419-634-2626. And I have my e-mail up usually all day long: hamilton.college@outlook.com.

Thanks for your ongoing patience as we continue to get things fixed and up to speed in our parish!

START OF WEEKEND MASSES – REMINDERS

BASIC INFORMATION:

1. This weekend, of course, we continue public Masses, as allowed by our Ohio Bishops. Please note that we are observing the usual "summer" cluster Mass schedule:
Kenton: Sat 4:00 pm and Sun 9:00 am
Ada: Sat 5:30 pm and Sun 11:00 pm (remember that last year we had already decided that the 8:30 Mass would only be a "school year" Mass)
2. The usual **Saturday Confessions will not take place**; they will continue in the social-distanced format on Wednesdays and Sundays on a rotational basis as described in past updates. See the section below for an updated schedule.
3. Remember that the **obligation to come to Mass is dispensed until September 13** by the Ohio Bishops. You are not under any requirement to come if you do not feel comfortable in doing so. We will therefore continue to offer Livestreaming (on a rotational-location basis). See the Livestream section below for more information.

BEFORE COMING TO MASS:

1. According to the Diocese, those who are in **“high risk” demographics** or who have symptoms “are especially cautioned to avoid public gatherings, including Mass”. Please use your discretion and consult with a physician as needed.
2. **Masks:** As you noted in Bishop’s Guidelines, **all people in the pews on-site for Mass need to wear some sort of face covering**. The only exceptions are 1) those under age two, 2) when individuals are serving a liturgical role in the sanctuary itself, or 3) when you come up for Holy Communion. I know it is awkward and unpleasant to wear masks, but please cooperate with this directive of our Bishop. If you happen to forget to bring one, we will have a very limited supply of extra masks in the narthex of each church.
3. Do **“hand hygiene” at home** before coming.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU COME ON-SITE

1. Please make sure you **always maintain safe distance from everyone else** – 6 feet apart. I know it will be exciting to see everyone else after so long apart, but please refrain from the urge to run up and hug others, and please keep an eye on your children to make sure they don’t do the same.
2. There will be **sanitizer** everywhere; please take a squirt when entering and when leaving.
3. Based on Bishop’s Guidelines about social distancing, we have had to **close off every other pew** for social-distanced seating, and to space chairs apart in our “overflow” areas at each parish. We will be not be able to use every seat. Seating is more limited than before.
4. **FAMILY MEMBERS CAN SIT TOGETHER** within a pew.
5. **INDIVIDUALS MUST SIT 6’ APART OR FROM THE NEAREST FAMILY**. On a practical level, this means that only 2 individuals are able to sit in an Ada pew or row of chairs, and only 3 individuals can sit in a Kenton pew.
6. Based on Bishop’s Guidelines, we had to **remove hymnals and missalettes** and all other “papers” from the pews, to reduce surfaces to contaminate.
7. You are **not expected to try to sing** while wearing your masks; in fact, it is discouraged so as to reduce the potential spread of air-borne germs. The cantor and clergy will sing the hymns and responses for you.
8. There will be **no Offertory Procession** or the use of the **Sign of Peace** (shaking hands).
9. But a **collection** (using the long-handled baskets) will still take place.
10. **Bulletins** will only be passed out at the END OF MASS, so that they can be taken directly home and not handled in the pews.

HOLY COMMUNION

1. Based on **Bishop Brennan’s directives and preferences**, we will still offer Holy Communion during Mass itself, but with the following points:
2. The **Precious Blood** will not be distributed except to Dcn. Mike or to our Instituted Acolyte.
3. We will have only **one line for Communion** (not two) in the aisle.
4. Therefore, and the reduce numbers in the sanctuary, we will **not need any EOMHC’s**.
5. When you come for Communion, please maintain a **6-foot distance** between people in the aisle. There will be tape markings on the floor to assist.
6. **Remove your mask** before coming for Communion, according to guidance given by Bishop.
7. Bishop strongly prefers people to receive Communion **“in the hand”** to reduce potential contact with saliva, etc.
8. You should not wear gloves to receive Communion.
9. **Note for Ada:** Those seated in the Social Hall should REMAIN IN THE HALL for Communion; the clergy will come to you, which sometimes may have to occur after the main body has been tended to. **DO NOT** migrate into the main body of the church to join its Communion line.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

1. **After each Mass**, we will need a **few volunteers** to stay for a few minutes **to help sanitize** the pews that were used, handles, knobs, etc). Please consider helping with this. We will have gloves and cleaning supplies and cloths available.
2. We **may need** extra volunteers for **ushers** at some Masses to help with the Collection, depending on whether our regular ushers feel comfortable with coming to a given Mass. Please be alert and step forward if no one seems to be taking up the Collection.

NOTES FOR LITURGICAL VOLUNTEERS

1. Bishop wants to keep people in the sanctuary to a minimum. As such, we will have only one lector and one server for a Mass, in addition to the musicians.
2. **Lectors:** You are welcome to sit in a designated "Lector Chair" in the sanctuary between the readings. Be prepared to also do the Psalm on the occasions when we may not have a Cantor.
3. **Servers:** Your roles will be simplified for Masses, and I will give you instructions before Mass begins. Specifically, you do not need to "hold the Sacramentary" for the priest, and you will not need to set up the altar (Deacon or Acolyte will do that), nor the "washing of hands". You will mainly assist with the Processional/Recessional Cross, the "bells", and helping with the clearing of the altar.
4. **EOMHC's** – as noted above, we will not need any EOMHC's since we will have only 1 (or Ada's 2) Communion locations. We will nearly always have either Deacon Mike or Acolyte Nick with us.
5. Remember, Bishop has indicated that those ministering in the sanctuary ought not to wear masks as they perform their duties while they are in the sanctuary (or in a procession).
6. **Ushers:** Please assist with parishioners upon arrival to show them the sanitizer, to help find seats which are socially distant as described above; continue to take up the Collection, but please immediately bring the collection into the Sacristy for safe keeping during Mass. There will be no Offertory (Gifts) Procession.
7. **Counters:** Kathy or Desiree will be in contact with you on how to go about counting the collection depending upon your comfort level and ability to attend. Please contact them for questions.

LIVESTREAM MASS SCHEDULE

We will continue to offer Livestreamed Cluster Masses for the benefit of those who are not ready or comfortable with coming on-site for Mass. This is being "rotated" between the two parishes each week.

According to the rotation, **Livestreaming will be from Immaculate Conception this weekend (June 14)** at the **9:00 am Mass**. The rotation will then continue to alternate between both parishes' Sunday morning Mass, such that it goes "back and forth" each week between the times of 9:00 and 11:00.

To access this weekend's Livestream Mass, please use the usual link we have been using:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCVxcsTyz-ukNpEDHVkQWKVw>

Attached to this Update is this weekend's Livestream Mass **Worship Aid** for those viewing from home. (For those coming on-site, please DO NOT print this out and bring it with you, since we have been directed by the Diocese not to have hymnals or other papers in the pews, to reduce "surfaces" that could be contaminated.)

Also attached to this Update is this weekend's **bulletin for Kenton** and a **bulletin for Ada**.

WEEKDAY MASSES

For **Weekday Masses**, please note that we will observe what we normally have done in the past with our “August Mass Schedule”. Therefore, we will offer DAILY MASSES as follows, all at 9:00 am:

Ada: on Mondays and Tuesdays

Kenton: on Wednesdays and Fridays

UPDATED SOCIAL-DISTANCED CONFESSION SCHEDULE

Reminder that we are still offering the new “Social-Distanced COVID **Confessions By Appointment**” instead of the previous “Saturday” confession times. Please see the Confessions attachment on the parish websites for the particulars; appointments can be made by calling me at 419-634-2626 (leave a message if needed). The following is continuation of the “rotated” schedule of dates and places:

SUN 14 JUNE 4:00-6:00 @ KENTON

WED 17 JUNE 4:00-6:00 @ ADA

SUN 21 JUNE 4:00-6:00 @ ADA

WED 24 JUNE 4:00-6:00 @ KENTON

SUN 28 JUNE 4:00-6:00 @ KENTON

WED 1 JULY 4:00-6:00 @ ADA