



# St. Matthew Catholic Church

221 John Paul Avenue, Statesboro, GA 30458

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May 20, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

**The public celebration of Mass will begin at the end of May. The obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains suspended through Sunday, June 28, 2020, at which time the Diocese will re-evaluate safety concerns. If parishioners are in the higher risk category due to current illness, age, have a chronic health condition, or have a compromised immune system, they are asked to remain at home.**

**Daily Mass will resume on Monday, May 25. Mass times on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday will be at 12:10 pm and at 5:30 pm on Wednesdays. The Sunday Masses will resume on May 31, 2020. The Spanish Mass will resume on Saturday, June 6 at 5 pm. Social distancing of six feet between individuals/families will be in effect! The 6 pm Sunday Mass will be continued through the summer. Please check your email, our website, and our Facebook page for a link to reserve a spot for weekend AND daily Masses. You may also call us at 912-681-6726.**

For faith formation and opportunities for spiritual growth for all ages, **I encourage you to take advantage of our FORMED program**, which is available online. To access FORMED for free go to: [www.formed.org](http://www.formed.org).

Our clergy, staff, and lay leaders have examined the needs of our parish regarding maintaining social distancing guidelines for gathering. **On the back of this letter you will find the guidelines and temporary liturgical changes we will be implementing to ensure the well-being of everyone who attends Mass.** While we know the strength given to us in this most Blessed Sacrament, I offer a reminder that you are not *obligated* to receive the Eucharist when you attend Mass. One of the side transepts will be reserved for those who have concerns and wish to wait to receive Communion until they feel more comfortable. Those who are not comfortable with attending a larger weekend gathering, but long to receive the Eucharist, are encouraged to attend daily Mass. **Daily Mass on Tuesdays and Thursdays will be reserved for at-risk parishioners who desire to attend Mass and receive the Eucharist. Attendance at those Masses will be limited to 20 parishioners. Please reserve a spot.**

Let us join together in our prayers for an end to this pandemic and for decision-making that places the dignity of human life as the first priority. Many people are suffering due to the economic impact of difficult choices. Together we pray for them to recover livelihoods, and in the meantime, to find help from our parish and community. We remember most especially those who are sick, quarantined, or severely affected in any way by this viral outbreak. **If you are in need of the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick please call (478) 955-5854.**

Thank you for your continued support of our parish.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Fr. John R. Johnson  
Pastor

# St. Matthew COVID-19 Directives



Welcome back! The public celebration of Mass resumes on May 25, 2020!

The faithful are dispensed from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass through June 28, 2020.

Daily Mass on M, T, Th, and F at 12:10 pm and W at 5:30 pm.

Weekend Masses: Saturdays at 5 pm (beginning June 6) and Sundays at 8 am, 10:30 am, and 6 pm, beginning May 31. Overflow for the 10:30 am Mass will be in the social hall. Deacon John will distribute Communion to those in attendance in the social hall.



We will continue to livestream the 10:30 am Mass on Sundays!

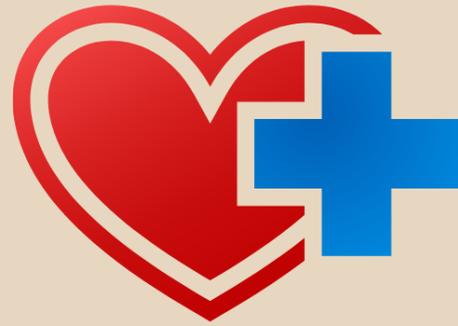
## Mass Attendance

- Please reserve your spot at the weekend Masses. Ushers will use a seating chart to help maximize the space safely.
- Only sit in designated areas.
- No Nursery and the Cry Room will be closed.
- Families may sit together, others must remain six feet apart.
- Parents are asked to accompany children to the restrooms.
- Please wear a facemask except for Communion.

## STAY HOME

Please stay home if:

- You have pre-existing conditions.
- You have been or think you have been exposed to COVID-19.
- You are feeling sick.
- You have a sick family member at home.



We are here to WORSHIP, not debate. Please be patient and respectful of the concerns of fellow parishioners regarding masks and spacing. The church will be disinfected between services.

## LITURGICAL CHANGES

- No hymnals/missalettes. Single-use Worship Guide instead.
- No Altar Servers or choir. Cantor only.
- Collection basket will be placed on the baptismal font instead of being passed.
- Sign of Peace: Smile/Nod. No handshakes.
- Use of the Chalice remains suspended.
- Parishioners who do not wish to receive Communion are asked to sit in the choir-side transept.
- Celebrant will wear a mask during distribution of Communion.
- ONE Communion station at the main aisle.
- One pew at a time for Communion.
- Parishioners must remain six feet apart.
- At the end of Mass, parishioners will be dismissed by rows, beginning with the back pew and moving forward to the front of the church.