

**Saints Peter & Paul
Ukrainian Catholic Church
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May 21, 2020

Dearest Parishioners of Saints Peter and Paul,

It has been a trying two months for all of us. Please know that you've been missed and I look forward to seeing all of you soon. With that in mind, I strongly encourage you to read the enclosed letter written by our Bishop Bohdan on the gradual opening of parishes. Some of our parishes may begin this process slightly sooner than we do, but because of our county's delay going into Phase Yellow, and after prayer and consultation, it is our plan to begin reopening of Saints Peter and Paul in Ambridge and Aliquippa on Pentecost weekend, May 30-31, with the normal Divine Liturgy schedule. I would ask that, **temporarily**, altar servers remain in the pews and do not serve at the altar.

With this in mind, we will be restricted to 25 people at each Liturgy for the time being. I don't see this to be a major issue in the Aliquippa parish, but, in the Ambridge parish it could be a little difficult. Please know that we are going to follow all the recommendations of Bishop Bohdan concerning cleaning of the church, social distancing, etc. Pews will be marked off, collection baskets will sit in the back of the church, and ***it is mandatory for everyone to wear a mask***. Gloves are also recommended.

We are planning for the Ambridge parish to celebrate the 11 A.M. Divine Liturgy on Pentecost Sunday, May 31st, at the cemetery. The altar will be set up outside, directly in front of the front doors of the chapel. There will be plenty of room to social distance in all directions. You may also stay in your car. Please bring your own lawn chairs. The parish will not provide seating. There will be a PA system and this liturgy will also be livestreamed. In case of inclement weather, my immediate plan is to still have the Divine Liturgy and I would ask people to remain in their cars. This of course is subject to change. We plan to continue Sunday 11 A.M. Divine Liturgies at the cemetery for the immediate future. I emphasize social distancing. Please refrain from handshaking and hugging at this time. Unless you are in the same household please keep 6 feet apart from each other.

Concerning the Ambridge parish, with the possibility of more than 25 people attending, I would ask that if you are planning to attend the 6 P.M. or the 8 A.M., call the rectory and notify us. We will be able to tell you if that particular liturgy has met its limit.

In addition, if anybody is feeling ill, you are asked not to attend Divine Liturgy. Bishop Bohdan has temporarily dispensed the Sunday obligation. Eucharist will be distributed at all liturgies per Bishop Bohdan's directives. Communion spoons will be sanitized frequently and numerous spoons will be used. We will instruct people how to safely receive communion, but if you have any concerns about receiving Eucharist at this time, please abstain. Spiritual reception of the Eucharist is also a very important thing.

I would ask that no more than 6 people, socially distancing themselves, sit in the parish choir lofts. In Ambridge, if the Hladio family is singing in the choir loft that day, I would ask that you sit downstairs.

If there are any other developments once this letter is sent out, I will discuss them at the livestream liturgy this Sunday, May 24th or I will put something on our parish website. Also, if you'd like to call me and talk to me personally, please feel free to do so.

I am looking forward to seeing you,

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Rev. Michael J. Polosky

Guidelines for Parishes upon Resumption of Public Services

Reverend Clergy, dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ!

Christ is Risen!

I wish to inform you that as part of the process implemented during COVID-19, allowing for gradual return to work as some restrictions lift, I am anxious to safely restart public celebration of the Divine Services in our parishes throughout the 11 states of St. Josaphat Eparchy.

In consultation with our clergy, I am granting permission, as of **May 21, 2020**, solemn feast of the **Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ**, for the public celebration of the Divine Services, where it is permissible, with safety guidelines outlined below:

- 1. The church should be cleaned/sanitized before each service when the public may be present, especially areas that are commonly touched (railings, doors, backs of pews, etc.). Please keep the churches well ventilated by opening windows or by turning on air-conditioner.**
- 2. Social distancing of 6 feet must be maintained, people are encouraged to wear face masks and gloves:**
- 3. While seating or standing in the pews – between non-family member**
- 4. While standing in line for Communion and returning to the pew**
- 5. Veneration of icons, etc. should done without touching or kissing them.**
- 6. There should be no social gatherings after the services.**
- 7. Parishioners should be reminded that if they are not feeling well that they should stay at home and reminded that they are not bound by the Sunday obligation if they are ill.**
- 8. Parishioners should also be instructed that if they wish to receive Communion they ought to open their mouths wide, do not touch the spoon and do not cough or sneeze upon it. Care should be taken in ensuring the proper sanitization of the spoon. The spoon will be sanitized when needed by wiping it with a cloth soaked in pure alcohol.**
- 9. Collection baskets are to be left in designated places so that parishioners may leave their offerings without passing around baskets.**
- 10. Sacrament of Penance must be administered in safe space with keeping social distance.**
- 11. Celebration of baptisms, weddings and funerals are allowed if all precautions listed above are observed.**

Please consider other precautionary measures! As always, use common sense and pastoral prudence to prevent the spread of the virus. For example, if there is not enough space for people to safely attend the Liturgy consider celebrating additional Liturgies that day.

Together, we continue to pray for all who are suffering from Covid-19, for all health care workers and first responders, for all the deceased and their families, and for easing of anxiety and tension caused by this pandemic.

Sincerely yours,

Most Rev. Bohdan J. Danylo