

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christ is Risen! Indeed He is Risen!

We are beginning to move to the next phase in safety protocols directed from His Eminence, Metropolitan Gregory and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as we move from “Red” status to “Yellow“, Yellow meaning groups of 25 people.

At St. John’s we will reopen next Sunday (May 24) to a maximum of 25 faithful, however THIS Sunday (May 17), we will have less than 25 and only by specific invitation from Father Joseph with the blessing of Metropolitan Gregory for what we are calling a “soft opening,” that is a partial reopening, to test our full safety protocols.

For those who will be asked this Sunday and going forward to attend, the following requirements will be in place:

1. Only the Sycamore Street door will be used for entry and exit. Please park on Sycamore Street for your convenience.

2. All entrants be given a touchless temperature test. The CDC maximum safe human temperature is 100.4. If your temperature is above 100.4, you will be asked to return home. Please let us know if you have taken any fever reducing medication, like Tylenol in the morning before coming to church.

3. All entrants must wear a mask upon entering and during the church service. (The cantor is not required to wear a mask when singing.) There will be cloth masks available to those who do not have one. We encourage you to bring your own mask.

4. All entrants before entering the church will be asked to use the provided hand sanitizer after their temperature is taken.

5. Every other pew will be closed and marked off with tape. Only open pews will contain two persons, sitting at least 6 feet apart. The 6-foot requirement does not apply to a family with children sitting together.

6. There will be no coffee hour until further notice.

All servers in the altar will wear protective masks. The serving clergy will wear a mask when distributing the Eucharist. For the safety of all, in the short-term, disposable spoons will be used for the distribution of the Eucharist, although this is not necessary, it will be used for the next few weeks.

FOR THIS WEEKEND ONLY, that is for SUNDAY, MAY 17, so that we may test our safety protocols, you will be contacted personally by Fr. Joseph to come to Church. After this weekend, that is starting on Sunday, May 24, a schedule by alphabetical group will be sent via email, regular mail, or by phone to all parishioners. If you are unable to

attend Sunday Divine Liturgy with your group, you will next be invited to church when your group is scheduled to attend. NO make-ups. NO trading of places. By group attendance only applies to Sunday Liturgy. Saturday Vespers, Feast Day Vespers and Feast Day Liturgies on weekdays are open to everyone up to the 25-person limit following all other safety protocols listed above. The alphabetical list has been modified to take into consideration those who travel together to church and extended families.

Again, following all safety protocols, the adult CCE classes will resume at a date to be determined and shared. Also, pre-marital classes, baptisms and weddings will resume. Father Joseph will reach out for scheduling options. Church school will resume in the fall.

Parishioners who are homebound or have informed Fr. Joseph, that due to pre-existing medical or other concerns that they are NOT ready to return to church, will not be listed in the alphabetical groups. These parishioners may change their status at any time by informing Fr. Joseph before returning to church services. Father Joseph will resume home visitations with the approval of the homebound.

Is this plan perfect? No, but it is the best we can do to protect everyone in the parish as we come in more contact with each other. The plan will be reviewed and modified to improve it as we gain more experience using it. I am sure that all of us will continue to be patient and understanding, forgiving and loving of each other as we proceed in these unchartered and unprecedented times.

Please know that, along with the parish council, in consultation with His Eminence, we have made every effort to reopen St. John's in a safe and fair way, knowing that all of you are looking forward to returning and re-establishing parish life – not only as it was – but even better and more cherished than it was.

If you have any questions, please contact Fr. Joseph.

With love in the Risen Lord, I remain,

Yours in Christ,

Fr Joseph