

Greetings from Fr. Todd...

September 24, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The skies have finally cleared of the awful smokiness of the last couple of weeks and our autumn rains have begun. With the change of seasons and the continuation of the COVID-related health measures, I thought this would be a good opportunity to touch base and write a letter to all of you. First of all, I want to express my profound gratitude and say “thank you” to everyone who has continued to support St. Rita’s financially and our St. Vincent de Paul outreach to the poor with resources and time. Your generosity allows our vital ministries to do the Lord’s work during these difficult times.

I also wanted to update you on our Daily and Sunday Masses since the time of the implementation of the COVID health protocols. I am happy to report that our Masses have been slowly filling back up on the weekends and we have a steady Daily Mass crowd. We are still at Phase I in Portland per the State’s protocols and currently we are allowed a maximum of 50 people per Mass. The implementation of the health protocols has gone smoothly, and I thank everyone who has helped with the implementation of these norms and those who help with sanitizing the Church after every Mass. I want to assure everyone that it is safe to come to Church for Mass: We are blessed with a large church, which allows physical distancing for everyone. We also carefully sanitize the church after Mass and ensure that every norm is followed to ensure the health and safety for all of our participants. The Archbishop’s dispensation from the Sunday Obligation is still in effect. Nevertheless, I would like to encourage all those who are able to attend Mass to do so, not only because it is fulfilling a Divine command, but also because it is safe to do so. I know a number of folks are unable to partake in Mass due to age, illness, doctor’s orders or underlying health conditions. Nevertheless, if you have been holding off coming to church out of a desire to make sure there was sufficient room for others to attend, I want to assure you that we have room for you at Mass. Your participation is vital to your life in faith and receiving our Lord in the Holy Eucharist will give you the strength you need during these challenging times. In addition, I have word from the COVID team of the Archdiocese that COFFEE and DONUTS are permitted, with social distancing and with the coffee and donuts brought to the table. We are hoping to be able to restore our social time in the near future.

Lastly, I want to offer a word of encouragement and of hope: These are trying times we are living through. Many continue to suffer the effects of the pandemic, economic loss and disparity and social injustice. Jesus has given our parish a mission to be a beacon of hope and a light of truth in the midst of our neighborhood, and both Jesus and our parish will abide with us and be with us now and in the future. As we hear Jesus say in the Gospels: “Be not afraid!” Please stay in touch and connected with your community of faith. We need each other in our life of faith and to prepare for the future. Please pray for Lisa, Msgr. Murphy and me, and know of our daily prayers and Masses for you.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,
Fr. Todd Molinari