



May 1, 2021

Dear St. Patrick Parish Family and Parishioners,

May the peace of Jesus Christ and His glorious resurrection be with you all! As we celebrate this Feast day of St. Joseph the Worker and the beginning of the month of May, which has been traditionally a celebration in honor of our Blessed Mother Mary, may our heavenly intercessors pray for us during this time.

Throughout this pandemic, we have strived to make St. Patrick Catholic Church a comfortable and safe place of worship and I am thankful for the leadership of our previous pastor, Father Brian Eilers, in shepherding and guiding our parish during these interesting times. I am also thankful to my Staff, Leadership Team, Pastoral Council and Finance Councils, as well as, many of you as our parishioners, in guiding me during this time of transition in our parish, our diocese, our universal church and in the world. Thank you!

In the Gospel reading according to Mark 4:35-41, we hear and read Jesus Christ stating the following to His disciples,

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Therefore, with much prayer and discernment in gathering as much information, as your spiritual shepherd at St. Patrick Catholic Church and in union with our shepherd of the Diocese of Austin, Bishop Joe S. Vásquez, please know that I have heard your concerns, received your comments and acknowledge your feedback in light of Bishop Vásquez's recent pastoral letters. Thus, in union with Bishop Vásquez, I am offering the following instructions for our parish family which will take effect on **Saturday, May 8, 2021.**



The following *temporary* instructions will remain in effect until **Sunday, July 4, 2021** for the **Saturday, 5 pm Vigil Mass and the Sunday, 12:30 pm Mass in Spanish:**

1. Facemasks are encouraged to be worn.
2. Social distancing of one seat in between per family unit will remain.
3. Incense will not be used at these Masses.

The following instructions will take effect on **Saturday, May 8, 2021** for the **Sunday, 10 am Mass and the Sunday 5 pm Mass:**

1. Facemasks are no longer encouraged to be worn.
2. Social distancing will no longer be encouraged.
3. Incense will be used at these Masses.

The following instructions will take effect on **Saturday, May 8, 2021** for **all** Masses:

1. Cleaning for all Masses will no longer be required.
2. Live stream will be maintained for the Sunday 10 am and 12:30 pm Masses.
3. Communion will be distributed on the tongue or in the hand in all communion lines. If one desires to receive on the tongue, I strongly encourage the communicant to receive our Lord Jesus Christ in the Eucharist at the end of the communion line.

As such, as we approach the great solemnity of Pentecost during the weekend of May 22-May 23, may we continue to trust in the true Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, who came to save us from our sins and death. Moreover, I am proud of the facts that our parish has welcomed many of you back as we continue to grow in our gifts of hospitality, faithfulness, and service to God and to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Many of you have responded generously to the financial needs of our parish with several generous donations which have sustained our parish's ministries of building up the kingdom of God at St. Patrick. It is because of your generosity of your time, talent, and treasure, that we are growing as a faith community in being good stewards of the gifts of God by lowering our debt, maintaining our ministries, and joyfully evangelizing to those whom we meet. I am humbled, honored, and thankful to be your spiritual shepherd and I look forward, with the help of the Holy Spirit, in continuing our mission of making disciples and following Jesus Christ as a family of families.

May God the Father continue to bless our parish through the work of the Holy Spirit and bring to fulfilment the joy of the Risen Christ who has come to proclaim the good news of His life giving power, His life giving mercy, and His life giving grace in the Holy Eucharist!

Faithfully you remain in my prayers,

Father Paul-Michael Piega
Administrator and Spiritual Pastor