



# ST. BERNARD CONGREGATION

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May 27, 2020

Dear Saint Bernard family,

We continue to look forward to the day when we can all return to Holy Mass. Pray with me for this. I look forward to welcoming you here! Bishop Ricken has given all parishes the permission to distribute Holy Communion on Sundays if they choose, to help feed and nourish our souls with the living Eucharistic Lord.

Saint Bernard has chosen to participate in this opportunity. You are not obligated to come and receive Holy Communion. I will let you know when the dispensation to be excused from Sunday Mass is ended. Until then, I encourage you to stay faithful and unite yourself through spiritual communion during a virtual Mass whether offered online, TV, or radio.

The brief communion service we have been given to use by the diocese is indeed brief and reverent. Due to the covid-19 virus there are very specific parameters that need to be followed by each of us if we wish to receive Holy Communion. We will be publishing a video to help you prepare for this experience. Below is a description.

**When:** Every Sunday following the live stream Mass, Holy Communion will be offered beginning at 10:30 AM and continuing until 11:30 AM or until the crowd has all received.

**What to do before you arrive:** The expectation will be that you will have participated in some sort of virtual Saturday evening or Sunday Mass before receiving Holy Communion. Reception of Holy Communion needs to be connected with the offering of the Holy Mass. You may also read the scriptures for Sunday Mass in preparation.

**When you arrive:** To keep everyone safe, we are only using the entrance on Mary Queen drive by the Saint Bernard statue. The Knights of Columbus will be welcoming people into one driveway and ushering people on how to park to avoid anyone needing to back up. Upon arrival your place in line will be noted. The Knights of Columbus will call you out of your car and direct you to the Saint Bernard statue entrance. Cones and markers will be set up in order to practice safe social distancing. You will need to wear a mask in order to enter the church. Sanitize your hands. Please bring your own mask. Only **eight people** will be allowed entrance into the church at a time.

**Before Church Entry:** When you reach the door your temperature will be taken via a non-touch thermometer. We will scan your forehead. If you have a fever, you will not be allowed to proceed. Please anticipate this and do not come if you are feeling sick. Please bring your own mask.

**Waiting area:** The narthex will serve as a preparation area for entrance into the main church. Safe distancing will be practiced. Clear markers will be found helping you know where to stand. Families do not count as one person. Each individual is counted alone. We ask that the bathrooms only be used if necessary. We ask that people not leave their designated area. There

will be touch free sanitizers available. You will also see an offertory basket if you wish to drop off a donation to our parish. Thank you!

**In the Church:** As you proceed into the main church center aisle you will see that the pews will be roped off. The diocese has asked that no one be seated. Communicants will proceed up the center aisle and stand next to a marker. You will find a bow and a sign spaced 6 feet apart down the aisle. Take the next available position.

**The Communion Service:** The communion service will be brief and reverent. The provider will either be Father Mark, Deacon Bernie, or another designated Presider. Once the **eight people** who have been cleared by the Knights of Columbus are in their respective place in the center aisle, the presider will lead you in an opening prayer. The presider will then recite the Our Father with you. The presider will then say the words that are familiar to you from Mass: "Behold the Lamb of God..." You are invited to respond as at Mass: "Lord I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof..." The presider will then move to the center aisle to distribute Holy Communion. You will then proceed forward, spacing yourself from those around you by six feet, always practicing a safe distance. The flow of Reception of Holy Communion will be up the center aisle and then to the right exiting along the wall back to the St. Bernard Statue.

**Reception of Holy Communion:** You are asked to keep your mask on along with the presider. The presider will say "The Body of Christ" with their mask over their mouth. You are to reply "Amen" with your mask over your mouth. Holy Communion will be placed in your hands and we ask that you step aside an appropriate distance and consume the Sacred Host. Low gluten hosts are available, please inform the parish in advance so we have enough.

*Reception of Holy Communion on the Tongue* will be by a designated distributor in the Daily Mass Chapel. For reception of Holy Communion on the tongue proceed through the Communion line as all others. Bypass the presider when it is your turn and go to the right following the wall with the Stations of the Cross. The distributor for Holy Communion on the tongue will be clearly seen at the Daily Mass Chapel. Keep a reasonable distance for reception and after reception on the tongue you are to turn around and proceed out via the St. Bernard Statue Fire Exit. Do not return to the entrance door.

**Exiting the Main Church:** After you have consumed the Sacred Host proceed directly along the wall by the Stations of the Cross toward the fire exit near the Saint Bernard Statue. There will be signage to help you. **Do not** return to the entrance door. You are not allowed to be seated anywhere. A Prayer of Thanksgiving in gratitude for Holy Communion may be done in the car after departing the parking lot. We ask that you keep moving to facilitate efficiency of all our recipients.

**Returning to your car:** Please practice safe distancing as you exit the church and return to your car. Be aware of traffic. The Knights of Columbus will direct you out of the opposite driveway that you entered. Careful attention will be needed to avoid accidents. Please be aware and cautious. There should not be a need to back up your car.

**After you have left the Parking Lot:** Once you have left the parking lot you are encouraged to give thanks for the gift of Holy Communion. You are welcome to go and park in our school parking lot to take some time to pray. Communion services will continue until we are allowed more persons to attend a true Mass.

Many thanks for taking the time to absorb these guidelines and prayerfully prepare!

Fr. Mark Vander Steeg