

# ST. MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS

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A PARISH OF THE HOLY SAINTS AREA CATHOLIC COMMUNITY



The Rectory  
May 23, 2020  
Saturday in the 6<sup>th</sup> Week of Easter  
in tempore universalis contagii

Dear Parishioners of St. Mary Help of Christians,

Only yesterday, May 22, I prepared a letter laying out a plan for Drive-in Masses the Weekend of Pentecost, May 30 and 31. However, motivation for that plan was primarily based in limitations on religious gatherings in Governor Walz's Executive Order 20-56. Since then, there has been a modification of that order, allowing religious gatherings, indoors, with larger numbers but according to more stringent protocols.

In light of this change, I am planning to consult with the Parish Pastoral Council to weigh our new, broader options. While Drive-in Mass faces, in some sense, fewer restrictions than a celebration indoors, and may be more comfortable for some who need to be especially careful of this virus, it is less comfortable for others who prefer to participate in the Eucharist in a sacred space.

In any case, protocols and plans that I have established will need to be reconsidered in light of new, better-defined protocols from the Diocese of Saint Cloud, published today in order to ensure parishes comply with all aspects of the governor's order and the most recent MDH and CDC guidance. Hence, I must modify and then resubmit the parish's plan to the bishop's office. Only when the modified plan is approved will I be able to publish a schedule for public Masses at St. Mary Help of Christians Parish.

A lot has shifted and then shifted again in the last three days, so let me repeat the key points, just for clarity:

- **Previously published plans to celebrate Drive-in Mass Pentecost Weekend are suspended.**
- **I have suspended those plans in order to explore a greater variety of options, in addition to or even in place of drive-in celebrations, in light of changing diocesan guidance.**
- **I will not schedule anything until I have the approval of our safety protocols from the bishop.**

Sincerely in Christ,

*Fr. Matthew Crane*