



SAINT JOHN FISHER PARISH

April 15, 2021

Dear Parishioners:

Holy Week has always been special to me. Last year there were no confessions or any public services. This year we adapted to Covid-19 as best we could. Since we could not have a Penance Service, your priests spent extra hours for individual confessions. We utilized two larger rooms in church as confessionals to make people feel more comfortable. Many people came forth, often coming back to confessions for the first time since the pandemic struck.

We livestreamed the services on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday for those who preferred to watch it from home. Besides the people who were in church for the services, we found many households viewing them: Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper (367), Good Friday Service of the Passion with Communion (232) and the Easter Vigil (272). On Good Friday, Stations of the Cross took place at our outdoor stations. As a participant I thought it was preferable to indoor stations.

There were four celebrations on Easter Sunday. As usual the 9:00 Mass was livestreamed. About 750 households watched it from home. 120 of them came here afterwards to receive Communion. Since we could not accommodate everyone in church, Mass was projected through livestream to the Parish Activity Center. About 60 at the 9:00 Mass and 300 at the 11:00 Mass watched it from there.

As of this writing we are in the orange tier. This means that church capacity has moved from 25% to 50%. We are doing all we can to provide a safe venue for worship. This past Easter I was pleased to welcome more people back to church of all ages into the 90s. Some told me proudly that they had gotten both vaccinations and felt comfortable returning to church.

Our parish school is now open to all students. On Tuesday of Holy Week I celebrated the first school Mass of the year. Just this past week I had my first class with the 8th grade. I will only be teaching them for six weeks, but at least I get the chance to interact with them.

Next month we will have two celebrations that we could not do last May, due to Covid-19: Confirmation and First Communion. We postponed them outside over the summer. On May 8 Bishop Trudeau will administer the Sacrament of Confirmation. Since we have almost 100 youths to be confirmed, I asked that he do it in 2 ceremonies due to limited capacity of the church. He readily obliged. We will have two First Communion celebrations each on Saturdays, May 15 and 22. I decided not to have it during Sunday Mass due to Covid-19 related restrictions of the capacity.

We are doing our best to serve you and have tried to adapt as the situation changes. With more of you being vaccinated and the numbers dropping, I hope we can celebrate good news.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Msgr. David A. Sork
Pastor