

Dear Parishioners and Friends of Our Lady Queen of Poland Church,

Within the next few weeks, we will be opening our church for services, when Montgomery county lifts its ban. However, we will not be able to provide the same services as before the pandemic. There will be new guidelines set by the archdiocese of Washington and by Montgomery county, to which we will have to adhere. The date of our opening will be posted on our parish web site: <http://www.parafia-dc.org>. Please check in with our web site for periodic updates.

At this time our volunteers are working to ensure that our opening is safe for everyone who comes to pray at the mass. The seriousness of this pandemic dictates that we follow the guidelines and safety measures given by State and Local authorities and health officials, and the Archdiocese of Washington. Therefore, please understand that the logistics and schedule required to offer public Masses and liturgies under these guidelines will be very different than the last time you attended Mass. Please read the following guidelines carefully to facilitate a smooth reopening.

The dispensation from the Sunday and Holy Day obligation remains in effect and you may have to make the difficult decision to remain at home even as we offer public Masses. This would include those with COVID-19 or exposed to it, as well as those with upper respiratory or flu like symptoms or underlying medical conditions, compromised immune systems, the sick, the elderly, and those who are living with or in the presence of any individual at risk, or those that still do not feel comfortable being in a public setting. When in doubt, out of charity for others, please stay home. *Until such time as everyone can come into the church we strongly ask that you take our suggestions to heart.*

You are required to wear face masks for the entirety of Mass. If you choose to wear protective gloves, they must be removed prior to receiving Communion in the hand. We will also ask everyone to use hand sanitizer prior to entering the church, so please bring some with you. The church will have hand sanitizer in the vestibule of the church, and all will be required to use it prior to entering the church.

In order to provide the required distances between each person we can only accommodate 40 individuals at one time for mass. Everyone will have to sign up before coming for mass. You will have to specify how many people are in your group. You can only sign up for one week at a time. There will only be one mass and that will be at 12:00 on Sunday.

1. Only the priest and the lector will be allowed in the presbyterium. There are no altar servers during mass
2. Singing during mass will not be allowed. Only the organist will play and sing during mass
3. All hymn books and missals will be removed
4. Everyone at the mass will be required to wear a mask for the duration of the mass except the priest
5. Holy water dispensers will be removed from the church
6. You will be ushered into church and shown where you can sit and at the conclusion of mass you will be ushered out. You will be ushered to the front and work to the back.
7. There is no gathering before mass and after mass
8. Children who will not receive communion are to remain seated in their pew.
9. It is highly recommended that everyone receives Holy Communion in the hand
10. **As you make your way towards the priest for Communion, place one hand under the other while keeping your fingers together, making “a throne for the King,” as St. Cyril of Jerusalem says. Receive the Host in your hand, then step six feet away from the minister. Carefully loosen your facial covering (or mask by an ear loop), consume the Host, and replace the facial covering. If the minister accidentally touches anyone’s hand, he will immediately disinfect his own hands.**
11. Families may sit together, however you will be seated in the last pews only. If you have more than 4 individuals there will be an empty pew in between you and the next individual
12. At the conclusion of Mass, the ushers will dismiss by rows beginning from the back to the front of the church. As you go to your car, please keep socially distanced from others as you leave.
13. After the dismissal of the last pew, we will be sanitizing all the pews and common areas.
14. All bathrooms will be closed and will not be in use.

We ask for your patience with the implementation of our new plan of action. Please understand that we will make any changes deemed necessary to assure the safety of those attending, while also recognizing the importance of making the sacraments available. Our major concern is everyone’s health safety.

At this time we are also asking for your help with the disinfection and sanitizing of the church before and after each Sunday Mass. We will also need additional volunteers to be ushers. If we cannot secure the sufficient number of people to help with these new duties, then we cannot open and we cannot

celebrate Mass in our church. If you wish to help please contact Iza Macander at 301-770-7086

At this time, we can only accommodate a limited number of people during Mass. Therefore, we ask that everyone who wishes to attend must sign up on the web site [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com). The site automatically cuts off once the desired number of people is reached. Also, do not sign up every Sunday. We would like to accommodate as many people to attend Mass as possible. You will have until Saturday morning to sign up, and if you cannot attend on your designated day please take your name off the list so that someone else can come in your place.

Thank you and God bless you,

Fr. Jerzy Frydrych TChr, Pastor along with the Parish Council