



Parish Post-Pandemic Plan

Sample Pastor Letter #1

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Sample Pastor Letter #1
Planning for a post-pandemic parish

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ —

This is one of those letters I've looked forward to writing for what feels like a very long time! The purpose of this letter is to tell you about the plans we're making at [name of parish] to resume normal operations following months and months of precautionary measures due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Bishop [Name] has advised us that the general dispensation for the obligation to attend Sunday Mass will be lifted on [date]. What does this mean? First, if your health puts you at risk generally, you are always excused from the obligation to attend Mass in person. The Church has always recognized and allowed for limitations of age and infirmity that keep some of our members from attending Mass on a regular basis, and we always discourage you from coming to Mass if you are sick and could infect others (not just with Covid, but also with colds, flu, or other communicable illnesses). For this reason, we will continue to offer parishioners who need it the option to join us via live stream.

That said, for healthy adults and families who stopped coming to Mass because the dispensation excused the obligation, it is now time to safely rejoin your fellow parishioners at weekend Mass. We've missed you! And we're eager to reconnect with you and welcome you back to active participation in our parish.

Even for those who have already returned to weekly Mass, this is a time of renewal! We've all gone through a difficult time that has challenged our faith in many ways. We may have experienced ill health or cared for loved ones who suffered with Covid or other illnesses throughout this ordeal. Many of our families have suffered employment and financial difficulties. Still others of us have lost loved ones, and for most of those dearly departed, we were not able to adequately mourn together as a community. As your pastor, this, in particular, is something that has weighed on my heart.

And so, now that the restrictions from gathering as a parish community are ending, I invite all of us to prepare to **Return, Renew, and Rediscover** the precious gift of our Catholic faith! **Welcome to [name of parish]!** This is *your* parish, *your* faith community, and *your* spiritual home! It's my goal to use this moment as a time to lead all of us more deeply into discipleship so that we can rediscover the power we are given by the Holy Spirit to share the love and mercy of Jesus Christ.

Save these dates!

Date: [insert date]

Restrictions on occupancy in our church building will be lifted, allowing us to use all pews and doors.

- In keeping with state and local guidelines, [insert mask policy].
- For now, we still will not fill holy water stoups as a precaution [or insert specific policy].
- [Insert more specific policies as needed].

Date: [insert date]

Parish Reunion Event [include general information]

Date: [insert date]

Commemorative Event [include general information]