

**St. Thomas of Villanova
Church Reopening Update
5/26/2020**

I am aware that most of you are very anxious about getting back to church and worshipping like we always have. We have heard the statement made by the president that the church will be considered as an essential part of our living, and that is why he expects all the churches, mosques and synagogues to reopen. I totally agree with that, but at the same time I know that this process of reopening will take several steps until the time when will be able to go to Mass every Sunday or even every day.

At this time, we pastors are waiting for the wise and prudent decisions coming from the Archdiocese of Chicago and how we can proceed from here.

Thus far, we will be opening the church for funerals, weddings, baptisms, and reconciliation (Confession) for no more than 10 people inside the church. That's Step #1. After that we will make provision for private adoration in the church but also, for no more than 10 people at one time. Currently, we are waiting for a decision regarding celebrating regular Holy Masses. I think you can agree with me that here at St. Thomas of Villanova it is difficult to imagine allowing only 10 people to be at a Sunday Mass. How can we determine who can come and who will be left outside? These are the questions that still need to be worked out. I really hope the good decision will be made very soon and we will be able once again to celebrate the Holy Eucharist in community.

So, to be clear, for now we will start opening the Church this upcoming weekend of June 6 /7 for:

- Baptisms, scheduled for each Sunday at 12:00PM and 2:00PM
- Funeral Masses, scheduled for each Wednesday and Saturday at 10:00AM
- Weddings, scheduled for each Saturday at 12:00PM
- Sacrament of reconciliation (confession); we will start offering it on Sunday, June 7th from 8-10AM in the church (the old sacristy)

Please remember that for each of these prayer services there will be special safety guidelines that we will share with you before you come to the church. Also, there will be a team of volunteers who will make sure that we take every important step to keep everyone safe. To participate in any of these services, you would also need to register and leave your basic information -- name and phone number.

We will inform you about our next steps for reopening our church, soon.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Fr. Kris