



# ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST Catholic Church & School

June 7, 2020

Dear Parishioners:

Now that it's past, I can openly admit that I was a little nervous about how the roll-out of *The Catholic Comeback* would work last weekend. Piece of cake! (Literally!!! A parishioner at STA gave me a couple of pieces of a delicious cheese cake for my birthday on Saturday; another a pint of chocolate chip mint ice cream!) But the greeters and ushers at both STA and SJB were fantastic: courteous, friendly, helpful. We learned some things and will make adjustments as necessary (or helpful). For those who "took the plunge" and risked participating in the premier event of *The Catholic Comeback* it was good to have you home. Thanks for joining us!

The numbers at each parish were quite manageable. At St. John the Baptist, we had seventy- five or so people at Mass on Saturday and again on Sunday; at St. Thomas Aquinas, there were about forty at each Mass. The relatively light numbers made the ushers' task of seating attendees easy and unharried/unhurried. There was no waiting to be seated at either parish.

Asking people to pre-register at SJB worked well; we will continue to have pre-registration there in order to assure that we can maintain appropriate social distancing. Not having pre-registration at STA worked, too, so we will continue to allow anyone who wants to join us for Mass at STA to come unless/until the numbers grow to the point that proper social distancing is no longer possible. Again, in each parish, it will continue to be important to follow the ushers' directions and to be patient and courteous with one another, especially when it comes to exiting Church after Mass. I did not see any congestion or bunching up at the doors at any of the Masses. We will need to be especially alert to that possibility as attendance numbers pick up, as I'm sure they will! But I repeat: EVERYONE was GREAT on Pentecost Weekend! Thanks for your cooperation!

It looks like these practices will be our new norm for the foreseeable future, meaning through-out Phases One and Two of the Catholic Comeback Matrix. Restrictions will not be lifted completely until we enter into Phase Three, which won't be until the pandemic is over (or the powers-that-be decide to re-write the rules for dealing with CoVID-19). Meanwhile, the Matrix has been updated twice since I last communicated with you about it. So, if you haven't already done so, you might want to take a look at the latest version of ["The Catholic Comeback Matrix" \[version 3 – June 4, 2020\]](#).

The big change is that, effective this coming week, the number of people allowed to attend weekday Masses is raised to 50. Since I can't recall us ever having more than 50 people at a regular weekday Mass at either of our parishes, I think it's safe to shelve the requirement that people pre-register to attend a weekday Mass. (Please note, though: for weekend Masses at SJB, pre-registration is still necessary.) We will still practice social distancing at weekday Masses – just as we will on weekends. Thanks for your patience!

Fr. Philip D. Reifenberg, Pastor