

May 20, 2020

From Fr. Louis Maram Reddy:

Many of you have been watching Mass through live streaming or recording, but you have not been able to receive Holy Communion. The Bishops of Wisconsin have now made a plan to allow small groups of Catholics to gather in church to receive Holy Communion, outside of Mass. It is the Bishops' desire that the reception of the Eucharist, outside of Mass, will bring grace and comfort to the faithful, with specified restrictions and caution. The obligation to attend Mass is still suspended. **Beginning this Sunday (May 24) and on Sundays only** (no other days of the week), you have the opportunity (not obligation) to come to St. Mary's church between the ~~hours of noon-3:00 p.m.~~ ^{10am-noon} where I will distribute Holy Communion with a very brief (less than ten minutes) prayer service for each small group of no more than eight people. If you have compromised immunity, fever, or flu-like symptoms, please do not come; you are under no obligation. As preparation for your reception of Holy Communion, you are encouraged to watch the Sunday Mass on television or to read the scriptures of the day. At this time, Communion will not be taken to the homebound or nursing homes.

This is the procedure for you to follow:

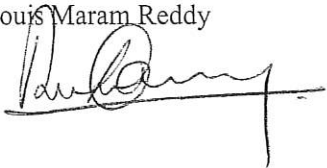
1. Arrive at the church at your desired time, and wait outside the church near the handicapped entrance. Maintain social distance of six feet. Please wear a mask (I will also be wearing a mask.) and remove or lower it to receive Communion. If eight people are already waiting by the door, please wait in your car. Please don't anticipate using restrooms or other public spaces in the church.
2. A person at the door will tell you when you may enter, after the group ahead of you has left the church (through a different door). For example, a group of eight (8) might be: a family of four (4), plus a family of three (3), plus one individual person. If there is no one else waiting, there's no need for you to wait for a group of eight. Please use the hand sanitizer inside the door and enter the church to stand in front of the altar—do not sit in a pew. The places to stand will be marked with tape, to easily maintain social distancing.
3. I will lead a very brief prayer service, including the Lord's Prayer, and then will distribute Communion to each person in your hand only—not on the tongue—no exceptions. After you have consumed the consecrated host, and together we pray a brief closing prayer, you will immediately exit the church through a different door, using the designated aisle and the back door, which will be marked.
4. Do not stop to pray in the church, before or after receiving Communion. Personal prayer can take place in your car or at home. The goal is to maintain movement, so that people are exposed to each other for the least amount of time. Please don't linger or socialize in the parking lot.

This procedure may seem cumbersome, but we want to take every precaution to prevent the spread of COVID-19; the primary goal is that you will be able to receive the Eucharist with these precautions, if you desire.

If it is determined that we need, in the future, to extend the hours of Communion distribution, we will make that adjustment. No one will be turned away, and I will remain as long as necessary to distribute Holy Communion to everyone who is waiting. Your patience is appreciated.

We are very pleased to offer this opportunity for you to receive the Eucharist, and we hope and pray that by receiving Holy Communion, God will give us all strength to continue our journeys of faith together at this trying time.

Blessings and peace,
Fr. Louis Maram Reddy



Current Schedule of Services at St. Mary Church:

Daily live-stream Mass on Facebook: St. Mary's Catholic Parish Tomahawk, WI

9:00 a.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Note: Beginning on June 1st, there will be no Mass on Monday.

6:00 p.m. Saturday (this Mass will celebrate the Sunday readings, and can continue to be viewed at any time after the 6 p.m. recording).

9:30 a.m. Friday—Divine Mercy Chaplet (following Mass)

Important notice to all ushers:

As we plan and prepare to resume public Masses, the responsibilities of ushers will be very important, and specific duties will be required, including a training/information session. We need an updated and accurate roster of ushers—please call Tracy at the parish office (715-453-2878) or email Jan Huseby at jhuseby@smctomahawk.com to provide your current contact information including: name, phone number, mailing address, email address (if you use email). It is also helpful to know which time you attend Mass most often. We are asking that those who help **only** to take the collection please decide whether or not you are willing to assume the full responsibilities of an usher for the entire Mass. Because of health guidelines that will be in place, the usher ministry will be at the forefront of helping to implement the safety measures.

If you are in a high risk category (elderly, or have health conditions which put you at higher risk of infection), please do not feel pressured or obligated to be an usher at this time. If you have never been an usher but would like to become one, now is the time to consider volunteering—but only if you are comfortable in doing so.