Dear parish family,

The past year has been hard for many of us. I have been praying each day for you and your families, asking Our Lord to protect you and your loved ones during these challenging months.

I was not sent to **[PARISH]** to live and work alone. I was sent to serve and lead this community of people — our family of faith. One of the most challenging parts of this year has been the dispersal of our parish community, as necessary as it was for the health and wellbeing of our parishioners. While our live streamed Masses have been a means to help nourish our souls and keep connected when we couldn't all be together for Mass, we must remember that God did not come to us virtually. He came to us — and continues to come to us — in the flesh in the Holy Sacrifice of Mass, which is the source and summit of our faith.

In recognition of the indispensable nature of the Holy Eucharist in our lives as Catholics, Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron has announced that the general dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation will expire on March 13. As we begin the Lenten season, this means that Catholics who have resumed other activities, such as widening one’s social circle or doing non-essential shopping, should also prepare to return to Mass in recognition of its preeminence in our lives as Catholics.

Particular dispensations will remain for those in need, including Catholics who are at greater risk of illness and those who would experience significant anxiety or fear of getting sick from being in a public setting. More information is available at [aod.org/comehometohope](http://aod.org/comehometohope). If you have questions about whether this applies to you, please do not hesitate to contact me at the parish.

For the past several months, many businesses have found new ways to reopen their doors with safety precautions in place, and we have, too. As a way to protect you and other parishioners, I invite you to return to Mass with a mask, frequent sanitizing, and social distancing. **[If applicable for the parish, there should be a line here about how to reserve a spot for Mass so that they can remain under 50 percent capacity.]**

The Mass is the foundation of parish life and a foretaste of heaven itself. We know, by faith, that the answer to our heart’s desire is the Eucharist: the source and summit of the Christian life. “In the Holy Eucharist we reach the summit of our participation in the victory of Christ over sin and death” (Unleash The Gospel Pastoral Letter).

We are ready to safely welcome you home to **[PARISH]** . Come home to hope.

Our updated Sunday Mass times are:

**[LIST]**

I invite you to visit our parish website for information on safety protocols, confession times, resources, and more: **[WEBSITE]**

See you on Sunday! Know that you are in my prayers, always**.**

**[PASTOR]**