**Note to St. Thomas the Apostle Parishioners “Mass Changes After June 16, 2020”:**

As you may have heard, Governor Parson lifted the statewide health order beginning June 16, 2020. Shortly thereafter, the Diocese of Jefferson City issued an updated Decree On Pastoral Activities which loosens some of the previous restrictions. The Decree can be found at https://diojeffcity.org/blog/2020/06/15/decree-on-pastoral-activities-following-the-governors-declaration-lifting-statewide-restrictions-for-the-covid-19-pandemic/ , on the parish website and is also attached to the bulletin.

With these considerations in mind, the St. Thomas the Apostle Parish will be implementing new guidelines starting immediately:

* Masks are encouraged but are not required.
* If you are symptomatic for COVID-19 please do not enter church.
* SEATING:
	+ The Blessed Virgin Mary side of the church will remain roped off for the next few weeks to allow for continued social distancing for those who prefer it.
	+ The St. Joseph side of the church and balcony will be open for seating as normal.
* Usher and Reader assignments will return to normal. Please watch the bulletin. If you do not wish to be assigned, please contact Diane Lueckenhoff or the Parish Office. Special instructions (checklist) for Ushers will be in back of church at each entrance. You are responsible for finding a replacement.
* Please maintain social distancing during Communion. The floor is marked for this purpose.
* There will be no offertory procession or sign of peace.
* Stationary basket(s) are available for offertory collection envelopes. The baskets are currently located in the aisle near handicap pew.
* Communion ministers are to sanitize hands before **and** after distributing Holy Communion and must use facemasks during distribution of Holy Communion.
* Missals are at the back of church. If you take one, please take it home with you as this becomes your personal missal.
* Hand sanitizers and masks are available in back of church.
* Holy water fonts will remain empty.

If you are uncomfortable in returning to Mass at St Thomas the Apostle, Bishop McKnight has dispensed the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligations until September 11, 2020, provided you follow one of the three (3) obligations found in his decree. Thanks for your patience!