

Dear St Paul of the Cross Parishioners,

We have set in place all the protocols required by the archdiocese: we have acquired the necessary supplies, we have set up the church respecting social distancing, we have recruited volunteers and produced a training video, and we have appointed a leadership team to oversee the reopening. Soon we will be submitting our certification form to the Archdiocese. As soon as we get their approval, we will be ready to open our church gradually. I will announce the details in a video that we will send out sometime next week. Please be patient.

In the meantime Governor Pritzker announced that all of the four Restore Illinois health regions have reached the required health benchmarks for advancing to Phase 3, which will begin tomorrow, May 29. He also issued guidance for reopening churches. The cardinal has emailed us, priests, saying that we may receive notification of further changes once the bishops of Illinois have looked at the governor's guidelines.

Here is what the cardinal has written to us.

The bishops of the Chicago Province will review the Governor's guidelines for churches and will communicate as soon as possible any decisions that go beyond the Plan we have in place. Therefore, parishes in the Archdiocese of Chicago can continue to be certified for Phases I and IA (Baptism, Reconciliation, Weddings, Funerals, private prayer and Eucharistic Adoration for 10 or fewer), but **not** Phase II (weekday and weekend Masses and groups larger than 10) until further notice.

I do anticipate that I will be able to provide you an update on opening churches for Phase II early next week. In fact, all things being equal, my genuine hope is that parishes might be certified to move into Phase II as early as the weekend of June 6-7. However, until the bishops have a chance to review the guidance offered and I confer with our Task Force, I ask for your full cooperation and support in staying with the Plan the bishops have already approved, keeping in mind the value of our unity and our responsibility to keep our people safe.

Believe me. I am as eager as you are to welcome you back into our beautiful church to share the Eucharist with you. Let us keep praying.

Yours warmly,

Fr Britto  
Pastor