

REOPENING THANK YOU

It has happened after weeks of waiting. I am thrilled that the doors are open. I am thrilled to see the faithful in the pews. None of this could have happened without a network of incredible staff members and volunteers who spent weeks planning for all this to take place. From those who a month ago began to sew masks and those who donated material to those who came to tape arrows, everyone came together for one goal, to REOPEN SAFELY. I would like to thank the Reopening Committee: Matt Guglielmi, Lucy Koepele, Paul Leganski, Rick Llanes, Mike Mockenhaupt and Dave Van Boekel. Thanks to them, the reopening volunteers have been well trained and provide the leadership to help us get from one place to another. With every meeting we had, new needs were raised. The Knights of Columbus helped fulfill a great need for the Lombardy entrance. Now it is safer. That is where we enter daily Mass. On the weekend it serves as a great entrance for those in need of more time getting to their place, such as those who are using a walker or cane. We consider them to have ambulatory needs so that parking lot on weekends will always be for them.

The save-a-seat reservation program was researched for a long time and we feel it is the best system for our needs. I trust that after one or two times of using it, all will find it easier than the first time. Sanitizing is important and our cleaning company will stay on top of this all weekend long and after each daily Mass, and church activity. We are doing all we can to be safe. Each and everyone shares the responsibility of doing their part. I know we will.

There are a few changes coming to our calendar in July. Beginning on July 1st there will be a change to our Mass schedule. We, like many other parishes, are evaluating how to respond to the faithful. We also know that in the past we have relied upon our senior priests such as Fr. Dan, our Pastor Emeritus. He is going to be 87 and we need to protect our senior priests. They are a treasure and offer us their great wisdom. Beginning in July we will no longer be offering Mass on Friday mornings at the parish. Instead, the deacons will offer a Communion Service on that day. The Friday Mass will be celebrated by Fr. Dan at the private chapel where he lives. He will offer the Mass with its intention in this safe environment. He will also be doing this for our Wednesday evening celebrations. Our neighboring parish of St. Patrick in Yorkville will no longer be having Monday Mass. This way that community of faith may find their way here on Mondays if they wish and those of us who wish can find our way to Yorkville on Fridays. I am thankful to Fr. Matt for working on this schedule so in our area everyone can get to Mass every day of the week if they wish. I am grateful to Fr. Dan for celebrating these Masses for us in the comfort of the private chapel at St. John Vianney where he resides.

If you would like to be a part of the reopening team and become a reopening usher or reopening greeter, please feel free to contact me and we will begin our second session of training. With everyone working together we have done great things to create a place to receive the precious gift of the Eucharist. Keeping focused on the why we do this makes all the sacrifices worthwhile.

Thank you and I look forward to seeing you here,



Father John

WHAT A FATHER DOES

On this day as a society we remember fathers. We reflect on the experiences we have shared with them and the impact they have had on us. Fathers, godfathers, grandfathers, adopted fathers, stepfathers, foster fathers, spiritual fathers; all play a role in our development. We lift them up today and ask God to bless them.

My dad was a behind-the-scenes person. As a volunteer, he never wanted to be in charge. He was always the assistant scoutmaster, never the head scout master. It was just his style. At Electromotive Division where he worked in La Grange he never wanted to be the boss, he passed on those opportunities. He just did his job and found satisfaction being able to leave work at work and go home where he could focus on his family. Our Boy Scout troop was known for hiking. We often camped in places where there were hiking trails. At times we would gather after Mass on a Sunday to do 20 miles of hiking on local trails. What many did not know is that on the trips when we hiked in neighboring states, my dad would hitch a ride to the post office and mail some envelopes back to our house. The envelopes would receive the post mark from the location of the hike. Late at his workbench in the basement, he would draw the logo of the hiking trail and paint it on the envelope. When us scouts graduated grade school, on behalf of our troop, each of us received one of the painted envelopes and inside the envelope was a list of all of the hikes you went on while you were in the troop. The amount of effort poured into creating these envelopes created a keepsake memory of your experiences with the troop. It all started with a blank envelope. It was amazing.

Dads do these kinds of things for their children all the time. They are about creating memories; they are about reminding their children of experiences shared and they are about connecting on lots of different levels. In the moment we may not realize it, but later in life when we reflect on these experiences, it is amazing what dads have the ability to do in the lives of us, their children.

I am grateful for my dad. The time and effort he sacrificed to ensure everyone in the troop felt what they accomplished was amazing. Today as we honor dads, as we honor all men of faith who have had an impact on us, may we be thankful that they took the time to be with us and for the ways in which they made that time special.



Father John Ouper