Dear parishioners and friends,

‘What are we waiting for?’ While our yearning for the Sacramental Presence of the Lord has been painful, we rejoice that we have been able to continue parish ministry in this Archdiocese. Many dioceses in our nation have not been nearly so fortunate!

As we anticipate stay-at-home restrictions being lifted in Minnesota, we can begin to hope for some measure of greater access to the Sacraments. In the attached letter, Archbishop Hebda outlines a vision for reinstating public Masses. The process he has outlined is slow and gradual. It might seem to some to be too cautious, and to others it might seem too bold. Nevertheless, I believe it points to a hopeful future. Please know that we value your safety, and remember that, for the time being, Catholics in this Archdiocese are dispensed of the obligation to be physically present at Sunday Mass. Participate as you feel comfortable.

Working with parish clergy and staff I have reflected over the past week about what the reopening process for our parish will look like. While we are doing our best to plan ahead, we must also stay apprised of day-to-day developments. From now until Sunday, May 24th, parish life will remain essentially the same as it has for the past several weeks. In addition to the live streaming Masses on YouTube and regular sign-ups for Holy Communion, the next two Sundays we will continue to offer the noon parking lot Mass at St. Clement.

In the meantime, please keep an eye on Flocknote e-mail communications, the parish website, our YouTube channel, and our Facebook page. If you (or someone you know) are not yet receiving our regular Flocknote e-mails and/or text message notifications, go to ourholycross.flocknote.com to sign up. Please know that you can always opt out at a future date.

Though we are very proud and fortunate to be a multi-campus parish, the present reality requires us to limit our public facility usage to a single campus. We will need all hands on deck to ensure that we are following the necessary protocols for safety and sanitation. Because of its large size, high ceilings, handicap accessibility, proximity to the parish office, security system, and Internet live-streaming capacities, the Holy Cross campus is best-disposed to promote the necessary standard of safety in our current situation.

While this decision is a necessity right now, it was an emotionally challenging one because I recognize that each of our campuses is an integral part of our parish as a whole. Our goal is to get back to normal, but our path to normalcy will not be straightforward—it will require sacrifice, compromise, and creativity from all of us. In order to implement the necessary protocols as we work back toward normalcy, we will recruit and train additional ushers and greeters. I pray that
our parishioners will respond generously to this request. Through this all we plan to continue to serve our beloved parishioners and guests as prudently and fervently as possible.

Beginning on May 24th it is anticipated that we will offer three Sunday Masses at Holy Cross open to the public: 9:30AM and 6:30PM in English, and 11:30AM in Polish. We believe that this number of Masses will allow us to meet the demands of attendance that first weekend. Stay tuned for more information about capacity, sign ups and other considerations. During this time the 9:30AM and 11:30AM Masses will continue to be live-streamed on YouTube. Depending on the initial response, Masses open to the public on certain weekdays may also be offered.

Continue letting us know how we can pray for you and your loved ones. The priests of Holy Cross will gladly carry those petitions to the altar. You can call the Parish Office at 612-930-0860 or share your intentions by mail or e-mail to parish.secretary@ourholycross.org. We are also responding to requests for the Sacraments for the sick and dying. We also continue to offer Funeral Masses with necessary restrictions during this time. I am grateful for the support, encouragement, and affirmation received from so many of you as well as the constructive feedback that helps us know how we can continue to serve you as best we can. Remember that amid all of life’s uncertainties, **The Cross Stands Firm**.

Grace and peace to you,

Fr. Howe, united with the clergy, parish leadership and staff

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*Holy Cross Parish, Serving the campuses of Holy Cross, St. Clement and St. Hedwig*

*Proud home to Minnesota’s only Catholic Polish Apostolate*

*As the world spins, the Cross stands firm.*