



Dear Parishioners,

Since the dawn of the COVID-19 pandemic, we've experienced various forms of difficult, albeit necessary separation. We've prayed patiently and faithfully for the end of the pandemic. We've endured loss of loved ones, jobs, time with family and friends and many other things.

As Catholics, while each of our circumstances has been unique, in some capacity and for some period of time, we've each had to go without fellowship and without the Holy Eucharist. We praise God that "in everything [He] works for good." (Rom 8:28) I pray that these absences have blessed us all with the time to reflect upon the joy that comes from fellowship, and the life that comes from the Eucharist.

For we are Created for Communion. That is, we are created for communion with each other, and we are created for Holy Communion, "the source and summit of the Christian Life." (CCC 1324)

We are created for fellowship. Just as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have a living union, so are we created to reflect their union in our relationships with others. It is through our relational nature that we recognize our vocations and grow in love and holiness.

It is powerful when we come together to pray. Jesus tells us, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20) Certainly, we can pray anywhere; the Lord invites us to relationship with Him. As such we can hear his voice and speak to him anywhere. There is something extra special about coming together in worship on the sabbath in the sanctuary. St. John Chrysostom said, "You cannot pray at home as at church, where there is a great multitude, where exclamations are cried out to God as from one great heart, and where there is something more: the union of minds, the accord of souls, the bond of charity, the prayers of the priests." (CCC 2179)

We are created for the Eucharist. While livestreaming, watching Mass on TV, and listening to it on the radio have been suitable ways to celebrate the Lord's Day when we could not come together in person and will continue to have their place, they lack one key piece: Jesus Himself. During the holy sacrifice of the Mass, Jesus Christ becomes truly present in the Eucharist. The bread and wine are not simply signs that lead us to Christ, but completely transform into the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

The Catechism tells us "The principal fruit of receiving the Eucharist in Holy Communion is an intimate union with Christ Jesus." (CCC 1391) How beautiful that Jesus has given us a way to be intimate with Him. Holy Communion also wipes away venial sins, preserves us from future sin, unites us with the mystical body of the Church and other Christian, and commits us to the poor. Further, Jesus teaches us "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you." (John 6:53) We are created for and need Holy Communion.

Thanks be to God, for He is answering our prayers! With the COVID-19 pandemic subsiding, we can return to the Communion for which we were created. I invite you to return to Mass, if you have not already. The dispensation will be lifted the weekend of July 3-4, and we look forward to seeing you back.

Please know that even after the lift of the COVID-19 Sunday Mass obligation dispensation, dispensations always remain in place for moral or physical impossibilities, such as illness or caring for an ill family member.

The Creator of the Universe created us with a desire for communion with each other and with Him. I joyfully await the reunion of our parish family at Mass.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Rev. Nicholas J. Froehle". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Rev. Nicholas J. Froehle

Pastor

Church of St. Michael Mass Times:

Tuesday—Friday:	8:30AM
Saturday:	4:30PM
Sunday:	8:00AM & 10:30AM