



August 18, 2021  
Wednesday of the Twentieth Week of Ordinary Time

Dear Parishioners:

I hope this note finds you well!

It is hard to believe that it is already the first day of school here in Strongsville! Please join me in praying that all students, faculty, staff, and parents – at any level of schooling – may have a very safe and successful year of learning! It would be awesome if they were able to begin fresh and without the concerns of COVID-19 again, but that’s not in the cards right now, so also pray that this new school year will be a healthy one!

Looking back over the past couple of months, I am so very excited to see many faces of our community begin to return to Mass once again. While we still have the concerns with COVID, we are hovering around 60% of our previous attendance. Thankfully, for us, given our large church we still have much more room for people. Yet, especially for those who continue to be cautious because of COVID, we continue to live-stream both 4:30pm Mass on Saturday and 10am Mass on Sunday. You can continue to find this through our website at [www.sjohio.org/live](http://www.sjohio.org/live) or directly by searching YouTube for “St. Joseph Catholic Church – Strongsville”. Speaking of COVID, here is a brief reminder of where things stand at this point: First, since August 10, the Diocese is asking that “all persons – whether vaccinated or unvaccinated – should consider wearing masks when in close proximity to others”. For the foreseeable future, this will be our policy that everyone should consider wearing masks at all indoor parish events. In addition, as the Diocesan recommendations went on to say: “it is inevitable that people will make different choices about masking and other public health recommendations. Everyone is reminded to show kindness and respect to one another, especially those who may be taking an approach different from their own. Individuals and families must decide for themselves how best to respond to the current situation taking into consideration information from credible health authorities while following our Lord's command, "As I have loved you, so you also should love one another" (John 13:34).” Secondly, in order to give a little more room to everyone, we will continue to have all Masses, as well as, Evening Prayer, in the church for the foreseeable future. And finally, while the reception of Communion on the tongue or on the hand remains the discretion of the communicant, we encourage those opting to receive on the tongue to wait until near the end of a Communion line and to receive Communion from either a priest or a deacon. This way, we can do our best to ensure everyone’s comfort.

Secondly, you may recall that earlier this year, our parish, along with the other parishes in the Diocese, were asked to complete a survey concerning “how well does our parish help you spiritually?” While we have previously shared the results, our committee, comprised of members of the Parish Finance and Pastoral Councils and Staff met with me and are working on survey to dive deeper into some of the

results. We felt the results gave us a great “perimeter”, yet we want to hear some more specific items. We hope to share a parish-specific survey with you soon, but in the meantime you may visit [www.sjohio.org/survey](http://www.sjohio.org/survey) to review the results and familiarize yourself with them prior to the next survey. We appreciate the time that you took to complete this Diocesan-wide survey and hope that you will do the same with our forthcoming parish-specific one!

And finally, this month, I draw your attention to the return of our Annual Parish Service Day. We will have this once again on Saturday, October 9. As you may have read, we’re looking for “neighbors” within Strongsville. An application was in the bulletin about two weekends ago, has already been given to all our homebound ministers, and remains available at [www.sjohio.org/service](http://www.sjohio.org/service). Please look around and see if there’s someone who may benefit from consideration. We’re looking forward to it! Applications are due to the Parish Office in about two weeks on Tuesday, August 31.

Have a blessed remainder of the week. I hope to see you in church!

St. Joseph, pray for us,  
~Fr. Joe