

**St Helen Catholic Church & School**  
Rev. Fr. Lucien Eugène Pierre, Ph.D., Pastor  
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*“For He testifieth: Thou art a Priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedech.” ~Hebrews 7:17*

September 30, 2020

Grace and Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!

My brothers and sisters, there is no doubt that the world looks very different right now as we are facing a worldwide pandemic. We recognize this is a strange and uncertain time for all our parishioners. Nevertheless, let us be real. We have had enough with this virus that tries to rob our sense of humanity and community. We are tired of staying home alone. We miss our parish family and friends. Zoom church has lost its luster. We yearn to be in church, singing, listening a live sermon, singing beautiful hymns, praying with our brothers and sisters, and socializing and chattering in the pavilion at coffee hour. Our self-discipline is wearing a little thin. And I too worry more about my parishioners' spiritual life and about our parish and its financial future. We are grieving all the people connected to our parish and family circles who have become ill or died. We are grieving all the events and plans that have been canceled. I have watched in horror as so many people are pushed over the financial brink or are required to endanger themselves at work in order to keep their jobs, and the fault lines in our society are fully exposed. My dear friends, we are not alone in this. Amid all this and so much more, our God is always present and will never abandon us.

As a Church community and together with our bishops and elected officials, we saw the possibility of returning to in-person church since May 29, 2020 following the CDC guidelines and the Archdiocese protocol to prevent and mitigate the spread of the virus. Some are confident in their good health and others are at risk by reason of age and/or medical conditions. We will continue to pray for all those who are at risk due to their pre-existence health conditions. Our school is now open physically (face to face). As your pastor and together with the pastoral team of our parish, we are encouraging you, dear parishioners, to come back to Mass and celebrate our Faith together as people of God. Prophet Jeremiah declares: “Heal me, LORD, and I will be healed; save me and I will be saved, for you are the one I praise.”

Certainly, I do understand that there are so many unknowns, and each of our parishes has its unique circumstance of space, demographics, geography, community, culture, and spirituality etc. So, I will encourage everyone to assess the situation. As your pastor, it is always my joy to see you and celebrate Holy Eucharist, the Lord Sacrifice, with you and for your loved ones deceased or living. While many of you may have some health issues, I want you to remember that I am here for you to assist you in your spiritual needs. Coming together as a community is the purpose and the mission of the church; to preach and celebrate our faith as the people of God. Without you, our celebration may lose its meaning and purpose; we need your help now, more than ever to ensure that St. Helen community remain a faith-filled community of hope and love. We have taken all the necessary precautions toward assuring your health safety.

As we have already embarked on coming back fully to church, we need to make sure that all of you regain your confidence, your faith and hope in the Lord; knowing He is in control. We need to make sure that the interests of all our parishioners are taken into consideration, especially those who are the most vulnerable.

**MASKS ARE MANDATORY** to enter the church. Hymnals & Missalettes will not be available. Songs and readings are posted on the screen. No hold and shake hands for the sign of peace and the Our Father. Hands Sanitizer will be available at the entrance of each door.

I continue to pray for the health and wellness of your family and yourself.

God bless you always.



Rev. Father Lucien Eugène Pierre, Ph.D.  
Pastor