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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Thanks be to God, recently we have seen the lifting of many COVID-19 restrictions. Therefore, in the Eparchy Saint Maron of Brooklyn, on the celebration of the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, Sunday June 27, 2021 we will return to many of our usual liturgical practices.

- Holy Communion is to be given under both species, on the tongue, unless someone requests, for serious reasons, to receive on the hand. All Holy Water fonts are to be filled as normal. The obligation for all to attend Divine Liturgy on Sunday and Holy Days of obligations will be reinstated. Those who have serious concerns about their health, as well the health of those who may live with them, may discern to stay home as that has always been an option in the Church. Masks are optional unless required by local law.

We return to this quasi-normality as a sign of faith in God. We have all been so very careful during this pandemic. We have also suffered great loss and illness, yet God has been good to us. I thank the priests, deacons and subdeacons, and all the parishioners who have helped keep our churches safe and holy, sanctuaries of God's holy presence in our tabernacles. I ask that we continue to model prudence, flexibility and calm as there are still some health risks, and many who want to be more vigilant.

Barring anything unforeseen, we hope to return to the normal exchange of the Greeting of Peace and totally eliminate Holy Communion in the hand, as of August 15, 2021, the Feast of the Assumption.

During these difficult months I have seen so many of you dealing so graciously with the many concerns facing you. May God give us the grace to continue to walk this earthly pilgrimage according to his will.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *Gregory*

+ Gregory John Mansour

GJM/rb