

St. Maria Goretti (SMG) Festival Update

Greetings:

When SMG began planning the festival event, COVID was not really an issue due to waning COVID cases and increasing COVID vaccination rates. As part of planning for the event, the parish has made significant financial commitments ordering catered food and venue rental, which are unrecoverable if the event doesn't go forward.

After considerable discussion with numerous parishioners (some of whom are comfortable attending as well as those who have concerns) and non-parish administrators, the parish is going forward with the event as scheduled on the 12th of September. We are reacting to the COVID concerns by planning to meet all State of Illinois COVID protocols for holding events such as this. The planning includes, but is not limited to:

- Masks are mandatory other than when eating/drinking.
- Social distancing will be followed. The Rock, as a facility, is rated capacity-wise for 600 people, significantly more than the number of tickets that have been or might be sold.
- Outside dining will be available. An outside tent with tables and chairs for dining will further increase separation protocol.
- Food will be plated by servers wearing masks and gloves. Food will be placed in "to go" containers allowing the diner to seat themselves outdoors, inside if preferred, or to take home.
- Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the venue.
- The caterer is versed in State of Illinois COVID protocols for this type of event, and we will comply with those protocols

Now, about tickets for the event:

- If you have already purchased a ticket, or are thinking of purchasing a dinner ticket, we believe you can enjoy the dinner in a safe manner that complies with all State of Illinois COVID guidelines for such an event. And we look forward to having you participate.
- If you previously purchased a ticket and are now uncomfortable attending the event, you may donate the \$12 ticket cost to help defray event costs.
- If you previously purchased a ticket and are uncomfortable about attending the event and do not want to donate the \$12 ticket cost, we have two options for you to consider:
 - You may trade your ticket for \$12 worth of basket raffle tickets. This benefits the parish as far as costs and provides you with value for your \$12. Just stop by The Rock on the 12th of September, exchange your dinner ticket for raffle tickets and place the raffle tickets in your basket(s) of choice.
 - You may also turn in your dinner ticket and get your money refunded. Stop by The Rock on the 12th, present your ticket and receive your money back.

The festival will occur as scheduled; and as stated above, we plan to comply with all recommended COVID protocols for your safety. We look forward to an enjoyable event.

ST. MARIA GORETTI FIRST ANNUAL FESTIVAL
The Rock, Coal Valley IL
12 September 2021 – 4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.