

LITURGY GUIDELINES – May 4, 2021

The following guidelines are to be followed to responsibly provide clean, safe, respectful, reverent environments for the celebrations of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, other Sacraments, and other occasions of public worship.

I. Capacity

- Effective immediately parishes located in counties where the risk level is red (substantial), or orange (moderate) should re-calculate the seating capacity of the churches to provide physical distancing (3-6 feet between individuals and family cohorts). Churches located in counties where the risk level is yellow (minimal) may lift all social distancing. Parishes in yellow counties should still adhere to the legal seating capacity of their buildings.
- Masks are to be worn throughout the entire liturgy. For receiving Holy Communion, masks may be removed momentarily.
- Pastors/Parochial Administrators, if the church campus/facilities allow, may consider outdoor seating with speakers set up and provide overflow seating in other church buildings.
- Outdoor Masses should be provided when there is a pastoral necessity, especially when the assembly cannot be accommodated indoors with physical distancing

II. Liturgy

- Deacons may assume the traditional role assisting at the altar in the Liturgy, if they observe all reasonable health and safety protocols, including reception of a vaccination and wearing a mask.
- Pastors should continue to use simple processions for entering and leaving the sanctuary.
- “Passing the basket” from one congregant to another for the offertory collection is not permitted. Ushers may use the traditional basket with the extended arm for the collection.
- The sign of peace may be offered. The sign of peace should be exchanged by bowing to one another. Family cohorts may exchange the sign of peace by a customary handshake or embrace.
- In a public concelebrated Mass, priests should receive Holy Communion by intinction. If the number of celebrant priests is 3 or few, a separate chalice may be prepared for each concelebrant. Until further notice, the chalice should not be shared among concelebrants or with deacons.
- Refrain from reintroducing the cup until further notice.
- The faithful are encouraged to receive Holy Communion in the hand. Proper sanitizing protocols should continue for persons requesting Communion on the tongue.
- All adult liturgical ministers, who self-declare having been vaccinated, may resume their role assisting at the altar during Mass. Masks are to be worn at all times by all liturgical ministers, excluding the priest presider. Pastors should

continue to provide for proper physical distancing among ministers functioning in the sanctuary.

- Pastors may continue to have one lector read the First and Second Readings of the Mass. Before approaching and after leaving the Ambo, the lectors should sanitize their hands. Lectors are to wear masks. They may remove them while reading.
- Altar servers may resume their ministry assisting at the altar during Mass. Altar servers should not hold the missal for the presider. Masks are to be worn at all times. Altar servers should be instructed to use sanitizer at appropriate times during the Liturgy.
- Singing should be limited to a single cantor unless the church facilities can allow for sufficient physical distancing among singers and musicians of wind-instruments. Choirs should continue to be limited to no more than 10 people, contingent on maintaining physical distancing. Pastors may determine if the Ordinary of the Mass is sung or chanted.

III. Sanitization

- The practice of sanitizing pews and other common surfaces after every liturgy may continue as an added precaution.

IV. Misc.

- At least one Sunday Mass should be livestreamed every week and on Holy Days of Obligation in the major languages of the parish.
- Pastors/Parochial Administrators should maintain a regular schedule of providing the faithful the opportunity to approach the Sacrament of Confession. Priests should continue to use alternative spaces for the Sacrament of Confession if confessional spaces are too confining and lack sufficient ventilation.
- In parishes located in orange (moderate) or yellow (minimal) counties, pastors may discontinue contact tracing.
- Temperature/health checks are no longer required. Parishioners should be advised that if they have any flu-like symptoms, they should not attend any public worship services.
- These same guidelines and principles apply to all celebrations of the Liturgy, devotions, Sacramentals, rituals, ceremonies, etc.
- Holy water fonts may be used. The fonts should be cleaned once a week.
- Parish bulletins may be distributed.
- Missalettes may be provided.