

Sacramental Guidelines for Reopening

FIRST COMMUNION

Parishes should adapt as necessary; **however, be careful not to violate social distancing, face covering and sanitizing practices.**

Parishes or pastors may **not** alter the number of allowed worshippers (between 15 and 20 percent of total capacity of the church as determined by the parish leadership team), social distancing, face covering or sanitizing guidelines.

A system of reservation should be used so that the parish team is able to manage the number of guests to allowable numbers.

Preparation

1. Entry and exit doors are to be adequately designated and monitored. Entry doors are to be propped or held open before Mass, and exit doors are to be propped or held open at the end of Mass to prevent people from touching the door handles, knobs or push plates.
2. The floor of the church should have tape marks observing proper social distance, designating where the faithful are to stand and where to move forward to during any procession (e.g., Communion).
3. In addition, all pews/seating are to be clearly marked or designated such that there is a six-foot perimeter in all directions for every individual seat. One pew or row of seating is to be left vacant between pews or rows used for seating congregants such that six feet of distance can be maintained in all directions. Seating should also be offset or staggered by row such that no two people sit directly in line with each other in adjacent seating areas.
4. Greeters should meet all outside the church or in the vestibule to ensure all have masks or face coverings, offer hand sanitizer and check list for reservations. They should remind worshippers that anyone who is ill or having symptoms of illness should not enter the church.
5. All hymnals, missalettes, loose papers or envelopes are to be taken out of the pews and stored. They may not be used at all until further notice.
6. There should be ushers assisting people in maintaining proper social distance throughout the celebration, both when people are seated and particularly when they move about as part of the celebration such as Communion.
7. Masks should be worn for the entire time the faithful are in the church. Per IDPH and CDC guidelines, those with breathing difficulties can be exempted from this requirement, but those individuals must observe the strictest of social distancing from anyone not living in their domicile. Children under two years of age are exempt from wearing face coverings or masks.
8. Determine procedures for people using the restrooms. It is suggested that only one person use the restrooms at a time.

Celebration of the Liturgy

1. No congregational singing is allowed at this time. A cantor and accompanist can be used but both must be separated from other ministers and congregants by 10 feet.
2. Participants, including ministers, are to sit in the designated/marked seats, keeping appropriate social distance. To emphasize: all should be wearing masks except when speaking.
3. For the opening procession, markers on the floor every six feet of the aisle should be used to maintain social distance.
4. For the Liturgy of the Word, the readers and the priest may lower their masks for the proclamation of the readings and the homily. This applies as well to the person announcing the petitions in the Universal Prayer/Prayer of the Faithful.
5. The procession with the gifts is omitted. The gifts are to be on the credence or side table and the priest (or deacon if there is one) can bring them to the altar.
6. For the collection there should be no baskets passed, nor should the baskets on the pole be used. Donations should be placed in a designated receptacle which does not move.
7. If there is a deacon and/or concelebrants, a chalice shall be consecrated for each.
8. For the consecration, the ciborium(ia) containing Hosts for distribution to the faithful should be placed on the side of the corporal, not directly under the priest's face in order to avoid any contamination during the Eucharist Prayer.
9. Holy Communion is to be distributed only under the form of the consecrated Host, and only in the hand, with the priest and ministers sanitizing their hands immediately before and immediately after distributing Communion.
10. The priest and extraordinary ministers are to wear face shields for the distribution of Communion.
11. For the distribution of Holy Communion, a single-file line for each Communion minister is necessary to maintain social distancing.
12. During the Communion procession, communicants are to be instructed to use the markers on the floor of the aisle to maintain social distance. The help of an usher or greeter, directing pew by pew as may be customary, will be very helpful.
13. The usher or greeter releasing the pew to line up for Communion should dispense one spray of sanitizer on each communicant's hands as they leave the pew, reminding the individual to not touch any surfaces or their clothing or skin until after they have consumed the Host. An alternative is to use a second usher near the front of the Communion line who dispenses sanitizer to individuals when they are third in line for the Host.
14. Before he begins distributing Communion, and before he dons his face shield or mask and goggles, the priest should announce to worshippers that the following is the procedure for reception of Communion:
 - a. Move forward in single file maintaining six feet between each person (look for markers on the floor).
 - b. Sanitize hands from table or from sanitizer offered by usher. Do not move forward to the priest to receive the Host until you have vigorously rubbed the sanitizer on your hands and the sanitizer has dried on your hands.
 - c. Do NOT touch your face, clothing or any other surface after sanitizing your hands.

- d. As you approach the priest or extraordinary minister, after you have sanitized your hands, receive the Host in your hand ONLY.
 - e. Step six feet to the side, remove strap from one ear of your mask or face covering, letting it hang from the other ear and uncovering your mouth, consume the Host.
 - f. Replace the mask over your mouth and nose and return to your seat.
15. The priest and extraordinary ministers move to a side table, sanitize their hands and don the face shield or mask and goggles. Explain your use of the face shield/mask and goggles as a protection for the congregation and yourself.
 16. After the distribution of Communion, the priest and other ministers disinfect their hands.
 17. For the procession out of church, the participants should be dismissed row by row, allowing for appropriate social distance on the way out.

Post Celebration and Cleaning

1. Pews and other high traffic areas of the church are to be cleaned using sanitizing wipes, with the removal of trash and other items from the pews.
2. Those performing the cleaning must wear gloves and a face mask.
3. All side tables and vessels/instruments used in the service must be sanitized/wiped clean and left to dry before reuse. Please note that rinsing with water alone is NOT sufficient to kill a virus.
4. After the celebration, the ritual books should be sanitized/wiped.