



## **COVID-19 Parish Guidance June 30, 2021**

### **Offering Masses and Providing Other Parish Ministry during the Ongoing Pandemic**

#### **Introductory Statement**

Over the last fifteen months, in the face of the coronavirus pandemic, we have adapted the ways we lived our daily lives, as well as the ways we worshiped as a Church.

As restrictions are lifted and parishes more fully reopen, our priority, as it has been throughout this pandemic, is to continue to practice our faith while keeping people safe.

Pastors are asked to implement these new guidelines with prudence, using sensible public health precautions, and with the safety and wellbeing of their parishioners in mind.

These new guidelines, approved by Archbishop Sample and effective June 30, 2021, replace all previous pandemic protocols established by the Archdiocese.

The COVID-19 Response Team, and the Pastoral Center will continue to serve as a resource to pastors and parishes as they offer ministry during the pandemic.

#### **Dispensation from the Obligation to attend Mass**

Effective Friday, July 16, 2021 Archbishop Sample rescinds the dispensation from the obligation to attend Holy Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation. Canon Law still allows those who are vulnerable, sick, or who have other grave reasons, to miss Holy Mass if necessary. Those unable to attend the Sunday Eucharist for such reasons are asked to honor the Lord in another way that day by watching a livestreamed Mass, praying the rosary, reading sacred Scripture, or otherwise setting aside time to be with the Lord.

#### **General Principles**

All indoor liturgical celebrations and faith gatherings are allowed to take place without capacity limitations, social distancing, sign-up systems, or segregation between those vaccinated and those unvaccinated.

Masks may be worn but are not required.

Implementation of these guidelines is left to the prudential judgment of the pastor.

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**Parish Ministry**

Pastors and their staff and volunteers are encouraged to foster the life and activities of the parish with renewed enthusiasm. This applies to all faith gatherings and parish activities, including sacramental preparation programs, faith formation, bible studies and vacation bible schools.

**Liturgical Practices**

All previous liturgical restrictions are lifted, except for the following:

1. The Precious Blood will not be offered to the faithful.
2. The Sign of Peace will not be exchanged through physical contact.

It is up to the pastor to determine if there will be a presentation of the gifts.  
It is up to the pastor to determine how the collection will be taken.

Holy water may return to fonts.

**Cleaning**

Cleaning after Masses and gatherings is no longer required.

**Ventilation**

Good ventilation in churches and gathering spaces is encouraged.

**Social Gatherings**

Social gatherings such as coffee and donuts and wedding and funeral receptions may take place so long as sensible health precautions are taken. This is left to the discretion of the pastor, in consultation with his leadership team.

**Livestreaming**

Livestreaming of Masses continues to be encouraged.