

Phase 1 Liturgical Guidelines

Diocese of Des Moines

May 15, 2020

Anticipatory Remarks

- All the faithful remain dispensed from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass until further notice and are dispensed of their Easter Duty for 2020. In addition, those who have been in contact with the virus, exposed to the virus, or shown symptoms at any time in the previous 14 days are to stay home. It is preferable and prudent to ask parishioners to take their temperature at home prior to coming to Mass.
- Parishes are encouraged to continue livestreaming Mass.
- Holy Water fonts are to remain empty until further notice.
- Hand sanitizer may be made available to the faithful. All ministers should wash hands thoroughly before Mass and refrain from any handshakes or acceptance of materials from parishioners before Mass. Arrangement should be made for any materials that need to be dropped off at church in a specific place or container.
- The faithful aged 5 and above are strongly encouraged to wear a mask¹ at Church and during the Mass, except for the brief moment of receiving Holy Communion. Parishes may require the use of masks. Extra masks should be made available for parishioners, preferably accessible prior to entrance. Ushers and other volunteers are required to make use of masks.
- Priests and other ministers are required to wear masks to distribute Holy Communion. If a priest cannot maintain a minimum of 15 feet distance from parishioners throughout the Mass they are required to wear a mask. Priests and other ministers (e.g. lectors) are permitted to wear masks throughout Mass if they so choose.
- The other guidelines laid out in the re-opening document and cleaning document are assumed here.

Mass Itself

- Traffic in and out of the Church should be monitored and staggered. Doors should be propped open by a stand if possible, or by an usher or another device to prevent people from touching doors.
- Ushers should –where possible- direct people to seating. The faithful will likely need to be told they may need to surrender usual spots/patterns of seating.
- A six feet social distance must be maintained between one family/household unit and another. Individuals [who did not arrive in the same car] must sit six feet apart.
 - Pews may need to be blocked off to achieve the six foot perimeter in all directions
- Altar servers should not be used. Parishes should only use a single Lector/commentator per Mass.

¹ When this document refers to masks, medical masks, cloth face coverings, or face shields are all implied as sufficient.

Offertory and collection:

- Any offertory procession is suspended. The gifts should be prepared at the altar.
 - Where possible, the use of a chalice pall or other covering for the presider's chalice is encouraged.
 - A lidded ciborium is to be preferred over an open bowl for the peoples' hosts.
 - The pastor's host should be on its own paten. The ciborium with the people's hosts should be placed at a distance. If a paten/bowl for the people must be used, consideration should be made to covering it with a pall.²
 - No basket either on pole or in hand should be passed among the faithful. A common depository (or depositories) may be placed at the entrance(s) of the Church for the faithful to place offerings in as they arrive or depart. If possible secure any collection in a safe place, and wait to count money for 48-72 hours. When money is counted masks and gloves should be used, and volunteers should wash hands after handing the collection.

Distribution of Holy Communion:

- Any concelebrants should receive via intinction from a separate chalice from the celebrant's. If deacons receive both Sacred Species, they should receive the Precious Blood by intinction only. (The rubrics indicate the celebrant does NOT intinct).
- For the distribution of Holy Communion: Communion ministers must wash their hands before Mass. They should use sanitizer before they personally receive Holy Communion and have not yet distributed Holy Communion.
 - Communion ministers should be those of 'non-risk' age. Several atypical options are available to Pastors/Administrators
 - They may elect to suspend the use of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
 - They may themselves elect to refrain from distributing communion due to age or underlying health issue.
 - If one has reservations, no communion minister may be forced to exercise this ministry.
 - Communion ministers should use sanitizer again at the conclusion of the distribution of Holy Communion.
- Communion ministers must use a mask or cloth face covering.
- Communion ministers should have access to either a sanitizing solution or a disinfectant wipe to sanitize fingers during the distribution of communion when contact is made with someone else's hands.
 - This could be achieved via having hand sanitizer near the communion station or a tub of wipes near the communion station

² This is to avoid cross contamination. The presider has to touch his host multiple times during the celebration of Mass. The pall/purificator is to prevent any contamination from a sneeze.

- At all times proper reverence must be shown to the Blessed Sacrament: Communion ministers--including clergy--are not permitted to wear gloves
- In regards to the communion line: pastors should consider how best to form a socially distanced line given their church architecture.
 - Six feet separation must be maintained between family units
 - Pastors are free to come up with more creative/restrictive considerations to control traffic flow in the Church.³ In lieu of a communion procession, pastors may elect to distribute communion by having ministers go into the nave of the church and pass through empty alternating pews.
- Bishop Joensen strongly urges and requests that the faithful only receive Holy Communion on the hand.
 - Personal piety must subordinate in this moment to the common good.
 - If someone insists on receiving on the tongue, they must wait until the end of communion.
 - All who receive on the tongue should participate in a single communion line.
 - The minister should sanitize their fingers after persons receive on the tongue.
 - In larger parishes, a solution might be to consider having one specific station for those who strongly desire to receive on the tongue.
- When approaching communion, the faithful are to:
 - bow
 - place their hands out in the usual manner and receive the Eucharist
 - after responding with the usual “Amen,” step to the side
 - pull their mask down, place communion in their mouth, and pull the mask back up
 - return to their seat
 - The consecrated Host must NOT be taken back to the pew to be consumed.
- Distribution from the chalice to the assembly is absolutely forbidden. Special exception may be made for those with extreme gluten intolerance with the consultation of the pastor.

After Mass

- Ushers should stagger traffic out of the Church to maintain the six foot distance between family units.
- No one should hand out materials after Mass, including bulletins. No one should accept materials from parishioners. As mentioned, a depository basket/collector can be used for parishioners to drop envelopes/contributions as they leave.
- Clergy should only greet parishioners from a six foot distance after Mass.
 - No one should shake hands, exchange hugs, or in any way make physical contact with each other.
- There are to be no receptions, socials, or ‘coffee/doughnuts’ after Mass.

³ E.g., If the pastor wishes to have ushers individually dismiss pews and not form a line per se.

- Worship space and bathrooms should be cleaned and disinfected prior to the next Mass, using the directives provided by the diocese.