



Diocese of Austin

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Vicar General

Temporary COVID-19 Protocols for the Celebration of the Sacraments in the Diocese of Austin *Updated September 16, 2020*

Pursuant to Bishop Vásquez' decree dated April 30, 2020, parishes in the Diocese of Austin must follow these revised temporary protocols when celebrating the sacraments. These revised protocols replace those published on July 28, 2020.

1. Parishes are to return to their pre-pandemic Mass schedules for Sunday and daily Mass and confessions no later than October 4, 2020.
2. Parishes are to encourage the following parishioners to remain at home and join the community through a livestreamed Mass: (i) those who are showing symptoms of COVID-19; (ii) those who have an underlying health condition making them vulnerable, or (iii) those who live with or care for anyone in the previous two categories.
3. Parishes are to encourage households to maintain safe distance between each other.
4. Parishes are to provide hand sanitizing opportunities at entrances and to the liturgical ministers.
5. Parishes are to encourage the faithful to wear face masks.
6. Parishes are to encourage the distribution of Holy Communion in the hand (the species of bread).
7. Parishes are to disinfect the pews and other regularly touched surfaces after each liturgy.
8. If a parish livestreams Mass, it may not save the recorded Mass on social media, the parish website, or on another website. Participating in the Mass via livestream is to be done concurrent and together with the parish community in the church. A parish may choose to save recorded homilies, either by video or audio, on social media or its website throughout the week.

These temporary protocols apply to all liturgies and remain in effect until updated or rescinded.

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Very Reverend James A. Misko
Vicar General