

# The Art of Reopening our Churches for Public Worship

## Overarching Principles

- Every effort must be made at prioritizing the safety of all who enter our facilities.
- Recommendations from the CDC, MDH and the Governor's Office must be adhered to as closely as is possible.
- Upholding the dignity of the liturgy must remain a focus as we prepare our celebrations.
- The obligation to participate in the Mass remains dispensed until further notice.
- If individuals are feeling ill, they must remain at home.
- Live-streaming of the Mass is encouraged to continue.
- Size of the assembly needs to be limited to 30% of seating capacity while following physical distancing requirements dependent on the guidance of public health authorities.

## Indications

- ✓ A bullet point as shown here, is an indication of **required** practice.
- A bullet point as shown here, is an indication of **recommended** practice.

## Amendments (May 23, 2020)

- ✓ Seating is limited to 250 persons or 25% capacity, whichever is less.
- ✓ All ministers, ordained or lay, involved with procession, distribution of Holy Communion and recession must wear face coverings.
- ✓ Altar Servers must wear face coverings for the entire Mass.
- ✓ Singing by the Liturgical Assembly is to be omitted. A cantor may be utilized.
- ✓ The ordinary of the Mass (i.e. Sanctus, Amen, etc.) must be recited.
- ✓ Deacons are to only receive the Precious Body.
- ✓ Communicants are required to receive Holy Communion in the hand.
- ✓ Holy Communion must be distributed at the prescribed time during Mass. It is not to be distributed after Mass.

*\*Please see pages 6 & 7 for additional information regarding funerals, weddings, baptisms, etc.*

## Preparing our Space

### ❖ Entrances

- ✓ Use of hand sanitizer is to be encouraged upon entering and exiting the church.
- ✓ Gatherings of people in gathering spaces should be discouraged.
- ✓ Holy Water fonts and stoups must remain empty.
- All doors could be propped open.
- Hospitality Ministers could be stationed at the entrances to encourage the use of hand sanitizer upon entering the church.
- Hospitality Ministers could hold doors open.

❖ Assembly Seating

- ✓ Pews are to be marked for seating.
- ✓ Physical distancing of six (6) feet is to be maintained, except for members of the same household.
- Members of the liturgical assembly may choose to wear face coverings. These must be removed before the reception of Holy Communion.
- Seating could be every three rows apart (see diagram for example).
- **Calculations could be made as to how many people are able to be in the church (not to exceed 250 people or 25%) and still maintain physical distancing.**

Row 1	Seating	6 feet empty	Seating
Row 2	EMPTY	EMPTY	EMPTY
Row 3	EMPTY	EMPTY	EMPTY
Row 4	Seating	6 feet empty	Seating

❖ Sanctuary Seating

- ✓ Presider's chair and Deacon's chair or Concelebrant chairs must be spaced six (6) feet apart.
- ✓ No other ministers are to be seated in the sanctuary.

**Ministers**

❖ Priests

- ✓ A priest with a respiratory infection of any kind or any illness must avoid celebrating public Masses. The same holds true for other ministers who might serve at a Mass (deacon, servers, lectors, etc.).
- ✓ The celebrant and other ministers must **not** wear face coverings or gloves during the celebration of the Mass.
- ✓ **The celebrant and other ministers must wear face coverings during processions and recessional and the distribution of Holy Communion.**
- ✓ The celebrant must sanitize his hands before and after each Mass.

❖ Deacons

- ✓ A deacon with a respiratory infection of any kind or any illness must avoid assisting at public Masses.
- ✓ The deacon must sanitize his hands before and after each Mass.
- ✓ **The deacon must wear face coverings during processions and recessional the distribution of Holy Communion.**

- ❖ Altar Servers
  - ✓ May be involved in processional and recessional.
  - ✓ They are not to hold the *Roman Missal* during any part of the Mass, nor assist with the *lavabo*.
  - ✓ All Altar Servers must sanitize their hands before and after Mass.
  - ✓ **All Altar Servers must wear face coverings during Mass.**
  - ✓ If they wear albs, these must not be used again until they have been laundered.
  - ✓ Processional Cross and candles must be wiped down after each Mass.
    - It may be best practice not to have altar servers at this time.
- ❖ Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
  - ✓ May continue to be involved in the distribution of Holy Communion (see specifics below).
  - ✓ All Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must sanitize hands before and after the distribution of Holy Communion.
  - ✓ **Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must wear face coverings during the distribution of Holy Communion.**
  - ✓ Hand sanitizer could be placed on small tables near communion stations for ministers to cleanse hands in the event they come into contact with the communicant.
- ❖ Ushers
  - ✓ Must not shake hands or offer an embrace to those gathering.
  - ✓ All Ushers must sanitize their hands before and after Mass.
    - Encourage the use of hand sanitizer when people enter or exit the church.
    - Help seat people or direct them to the available pews – must maintain physical distancing of six (6) feet.
    - Assist with indicating when people would enter the procession for the reception of Holy Communion.
- ❖ Lectors
  - ✓ May continue to proclaim the Word of God from the ambo.
  - ✓ All Lectors must sanitize their hands before and after Mass.
  - ✓ **Must wear a face covering during processional and recessional, if involved.**
    - It may be wise to use only one Lector for each Mass to reduce the number of people in the sanctuary and the number of people touching or sharing objects.
    - All books (i.e. *Lectionary*, binders, etc.) could be wiped down after each Mass.
- ❖ Music Ministers
  - ✓ Limited to accompanist and cantor.
  - ✓ All Music Ministers must sanitize their hands before and after Mass.
  - ✓ Keyboards, microphones, music stands, books, etc. must be wiped down after each liturgy.
  - ✓ **Congregational singing is to be omitted. Singing is to be done by cantor ONLY.**
    - Additional instrumentalists could be utilized if physical distancing is possible.

- ❖ Sacristans
  - Sacristans may set up for Mass as usual.
  - ✓ All Sacristans must sanitize their hands before and after handling any vessels, vestments, etc.
- ❖ Technology Ministers
  - ✓ All Technology Ministers must sanitize their hands before and after Mass.
  - ✓ If ministers are used to run projection systems or sound systems, the equipment must be wiped down after each liturgy.

## Order of Mass

- ❖ The Introductory Rites
  - ✓ Appropriate physical distance must be maintained during entrance procession.
  - ✓ **All ministers in the procession must wear face coverings.**
  - ✓ As a part of the introduction of the Mass of the day (or at some other designated time) the celebrant offers instruction to the liturgical assembly regarding process during Mass.
    - At the start of Mass, or at a suitable point during Mass, the priest should explain that those who desire to receive Holy Communion may do so at the appropriate time, but that those who wish to remain in their places may do so. He may add that the faithful should maintain a 6-foot distance from each other as they come forward for Holy Communion.
  - ✓ There is to be no Sprinkling Rite.
  - ✓ Altar Servers should not hold the *Roman Missal* for the Collect.
- ❖ The Liturgy of the Word
  - ✓ If a deacon is to proclaim the Gospel, he must receive the blessing from the celebrant while maintaining physical distancing requirements.
- ❖ The Liturgy of the Eucharist
  - ✓ Passing of offertory baskets is prohibited until further notice.
  - Baskets with long handles could be used by ushers. All attempts should be made to encourage online giving or placing contributions in a container in the gathering area before or after Mass.
  - ✓ The deacon or the celebrant himself must prepare the altar.
  - ✓ The gifts must not be processed to the altar but, instead, brought from the credence table.
  - ✓ The elements which will be consumed by the celebrant must be placed in the usual way. Additional corporals must be placed on the altar as far from the celebrant as is possible. Any hosts to be consecrated and distributed to the liturgical assembly must be placed on these corporals.
  - ✓ For the elevation of the sacred species at “*Through him, and with him, and in him,*” if a deacon is present, he may stand alongside the priest and elevate the chalice.
  - ✓ The invitation for the liturgical assembly to exchange a sign of peace is to be omitted.

- ✓ **The celebrant is the only one to consume the Precious Blood from the chalice. Concelebrants must receive by *intinction*.**
- ✓ **Deacons are to receive the Precious Body ONLY.**
- ✓ Members of the liturgical assembly are not to receive the Precious Blood until further notice.
- ✓ If any members of the liturgical assembly are wearing face coverings, they must remove them before coming forward for Holy Communion.
- ✓ Holy Communion may not be distributed with gloves, nor may it be received in the hand if a member of the liturgical assembly is wearing gloves.
- ✓ All ministers, including the celebrant and deacon, must sanitize their hands (e.g. with hand sanitizer) immediately before distributing Holy Communion.
- ✓ **Holy Communion must be received in the hand only and is to be distributed at the prescribed time during Mass**
  - Should someone come forward to receive a blessing, there should be no physical contact between individuals.
  - ✓ Physical distancing must be adhered to during the communion procession.
  - ✓ Ushers should assist with the communion procession.
    - Tape may be placed on aisles to indicate where people are to stand and move to during the communion procession.
  - ✓ At the conclusion of the distribution of Holy Communion, the celebrant (and any other ministers) carefully combine any remaining Body of Christ into one ciborium and place it in the tabernacle, and then sanitize their hands (e.g. with hand sanitizer). *NOTE: One may want to sanitize hands before combining the Body of Christ into a ciborium.*
  - ✓ Altar Servers are not to hold the *Roman Missal* for the Prayer after Communion.
- ❖ **The Concluding Rites**
  - ✓ The Mass concludes as usual.
  - ✓ Physical distancing requirements must be maintained during the recessional.
  - ✓ Ushers assist with dismissing the liturgical assembly so as to maintain physical distancing requirements.

### **Additional Requirements/Recommendations**

- ✓ Hymnals and missalettes must be removed from the church. If needed, use recyclable worship aids that are not to be shared.
- ✓ Special care must be taken to ensure sanitation takes place between Masses or other times the public may be entering the church.
- ✓ Congregating of people either before or after Mass is to be discouraged.
  - Consideration should be made for restroom use. A suggestion might be to place tape on the floor outside of the restroom to indicate where to stand in line to wait while maintaining physical distancing.

### **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)**

- Bishop Kettler has dispensed the need for two of the three scrutinies. If at least one scrutiny has not yet been celebrated, a date should be scheduled to do so. If in the Easter Season, due to the rankings of the Liturgical Calendar, this celebration would need to take place on a weekday. If taking place during Ordinary Time it may be celebrated on a Sunday (review of the Liturgical Calendar ranking needs to take place).
- It is recommended that the Third Scrutiny be celebrated. See the *Roman Missal* Ritual Masses: For the Conferral of the Sacraments of Initiation, No. 2: For the Celebration of the Scrutinies – C. Please Note: according to the *Roman Missal* the Gospel for this celebration is from the Fifth Sunday of Lent – Cycle A (Lazarus).
- If at least one scrutiny has been celebrated, you may schedule a Sunday Mass (even within the Easter Season) to celebrate initiation by following RCIA 218-243, if you have only Elect. If only candidates, follow the Rite of Reception beginning at 487. If both, you start at RCIA 566.
- ✓ Baptism by immersion must be suspended until further notice.
- ✓ If multiple baptisms of adults or children, water from different sources (e.g. separate bowls or pitchers) must be blessed and used.
- Any vessels used, including the Baptismal Font, should be sanitized after baptisms.
- ✓ With any indication of laying hands, this must be done without physical touch.
- ✓ When anointing during Confirmation, if multiple Elect, the celebrant must sanitize his hands after each one is anointed.

### **The Order of Celebrating Matrimony**

- ✓ All relevant requirements mentioned under “Order of the Mass” are to be adhered to until further notice.

### **The Order of Christian Funerals**

- ✓ All relevant requirements mentioned under “Order of the Mass” are to be adhered to until further notice.

### **The Order of Baptism of Children**

- ✓ All relevant requirements mentioned under “Order of the Mass” are to be adhered to until further notice.
- ✓ If multiple children, after each tracing of the sign of the cross and each anointing, the celebrant must sanitize his hands.
- ✓ Baptism by immersion must be suspended until further notice.
- ✓ If multiple baptisms of adults or children, water from different sources (e.g. separate bowls or pitchers) must be blessed and used.
- Any vessels used, including the Baptismal Font, should be sanitized after baptisms.

### **First Communion**

- ✓ All relevant requirements mentioned under “Order of the Mass” are to be adhered to until further notice.
- Consideration should be made for multiple Masses with fewer people participating.
- Pastors may determine to reschedule First Communions to a later date (e.g. Fall 2020)

### **Confirmation**

- ✓ All celebrations of the Sacrament of Confirmation will be rescheduled or confirmed by the Office of the Bishop or Vicar General.

### **Anointing of the Sick**

- It is recommended both the presiding ministers and the individual participating in the sacrament wear face covering.
- ✓ The presiding minister must sanitize his hands before and after the anointing.
- ✓ With any indication of laying hands, this must be done without physical touch.

### **Confession**

- It is recommended both the presiding ministers and the individuals participating in the sacrament wear face covering.
- Physical distancing must be maintained.
- The sacrament should be celebrated in a larger space with adequate ventilation.