



## GUIDELINES ON LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS AND RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Over the last fifteen months, in the face of the coronavirus pandemic, we have adapted the ways we lived our lives, as well as the ways we worshiped as a Church. As certain restrictions are lifted and parishes more fully reopen, our priority, as it has been throughout this pandemic, is our need to care for and protect one another. All parishes and Pastors are to implement the new guidelines with prudence, using sensible public health precautions, and with the safety and wellbeing of their parishioners in mind. These new guidelines, **effective June 15, 2021**, replace all previous guidelines established by the Archdiocese.

### General Considerations for Liturgical Celebrations and Religious Services

- All liturgical celebrations are allowed to take place indoors **without capacity limitations, social distancing, and/or prearranged “reservation” systems.**
- Parishes can hold prayer group meetings, ministerial and social gatherings, provided that sensible precautions are observed.
- **All liturgical ministers**—Altar Servers (vested), Lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (if needed), Ministers of Hospitality—**may exercise their ministries as usual in the celebration of the liturgy.**
- **Masks are not required for fully vaccinated individuals outdoors or indoors for religious services. Masks are required for unvaccinated individuals outdoors when social distancing is not possible, and at all times indoors. Parishes are not to verify who is and who is not vaccinated.**
- For now, masks and social distancing are required for employees and volunteers working in the church during Mass.
- Entry health screenings can be done **through self-attestation** without the need for an employee or volunteer to be present.
- Hand sanitation must be available for all visitors. This could range from antibacterial gel at the doors or wash stations in restrooms. **The use of hand sanitizer is not required for entry into buildings.**
- Parishes are not required to sanitize after each liturgy or service but should observe sensible public health precautions.
- Liturgical singing can take place.
- Hymnals, missalettes, and worship aids may be placed in the pews or distributed for use by the faithful.
- For now, Holy Communion will be offered **in the form of bread only. Communion on the hand is strongly encouraged.** The Ministers and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are encouraged to sanitize their hands before distributing Communion and after Communion has concluded.
- Liturgical processions may resume at their proper times.
- Water in the baptismal font and holy water fonts should be refreshed frequently.

### Baptisms/Confirmations

- Immersion fonts will not be used to confer Baptism. The water used for the Rite of Baptism is not to be reused. Blessed water is to be disposed appropriately after the Baptism is finished.
- The minister, being sensible with handwashing and public health precautions, may administer the Holy Oils appropriate to each Rite in the usual manner.

### Anointing of the Sick/Holy Communion to the Homebound

- As an important part of ministry, Priests are to attend to the needs of those who ask for the Anointing of the Sick.
- Ministers attending to the needs of the sick or homebound are to observe all sensible public health precautions. If in a hospital, follow the directions of the medical personnel before entering and upon leaving the room of the patient. For home visits, this includes but may not be limited to handwashing before and after the visit, and wearing a facemask.
- The Priest may administer the Oil of the Sick in the usual manner.
- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may be utilized to fulfill requests of bringing Holy Communion to the homebound. **It is highly recommended that they be fully vaccinated against the coronavirus.**
- It is not necessary for the recipient of Homebound Ministry to be fully vaccinated.