

Safety Guidelines for Attending Mass at St. John Vianney

Round Rock, TX

On April 30, 2020, our bishop, Most Rev. Joe Vásquez, issued a decree and a pastoral letter to the faithful in which he gave parishes the permission to hold Mass with a congregation as early as May 5, 2020.

We realize that not everyone is comfortable returning to Mass due to safety or health concerns. Please know that Bishop Vásquez has extended a dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass for those who are: “(1) sick; (2) those who are age 65 or older; (iii) those who have been advised by healthcare workers not to attend Mass ; (iv) those who sincerely believe that attending Mass will jeopardize their health or the health of a person with whom they reside; and (v) those who sincerely believe that because of the limitations imposed by the temporary protocols attending Mass is not reasonable.” If you do not fit into one of these categories, we invite you to join us for Mass in person.

In order to provide a safe and healthy environment at St. John Vianney, we ask that everyone familiarize themselves with the following information, which are in effect until further notice:

Mass Schedule at St. John Vianney

Vigil / Sunday Masses:

Saturdays: 5:30pm
Sundays: 8:00am
11:00am (Live-streamed on Parish Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/sjvroundrock>)

Daily Masses:

Daily Mass: Tuesday – Friday at 8:15 am (Live-streamed on Parish Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/sjvroundrock>)

- For a special listing of our Mass schedule for Christmas and other holidays, please visit our website:
www.sjvroundrock.org.

Is there a limit on how many people can come to Mass?

At this time, we are only able to allow **325 people** inside for each Mass. This number includes the priests and liturgical ministers. Once we reach capacity, we will ask you to attend a Mass scheduled for another time.

When will the doors to the Church be open? How early can I arrive?

The doors to the Church will be open one hour prior to the start of Mass with the exception of the 11am Mass. Doors will open at 10:30am so as to give us sufficient time to clean and disinfect the church after the prior Mass. Please do not gather in the Narthex before or after Mass to socialize.

Do I need to wear a mask or a cloth face-covering while at Mass?

Yes. Everyone over the age of 2 years must wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth while in the church. The mask may be removed for a brief period when receiving communion. Thank you for complying with this guideline. If you, or someone in your family, needs a mask, please contact an usher, priest, or deacon.

How will we enter the church for Mass?

Everyone who attends Mass will need to enter through the main (East) wooden doors of the church that lead into the Narthex. The North Chapel entrance will be locked and only available to exit the church. As you enter the church, we ask you to either wash your hands or use hand sanitizer. We will have limited amounts of hand sanitizer available, but would prefer that you use your own if you are able to do so. The restrooms will also be available for hand washing before and after Mass.

Will there be reserved seating? How do I choose my seat?

We will have one section of the church reserved for those who are particularly vulnerable to viral infection (over the age of 65 or other health concerns). This section will be located in the center section of the nave (main part of the church) on the confessional side (on your right as you walk into the main part of the Church). **Please note: this section will not be available for the 4pm Mass on Christmas Eve.**

The rest of the Church will be open seating. We will block off every other pew to allow proper physical distancing. Please keep six feet of separation between family units or households. This is the distance of one of the kneelers between you and the person next to you.

If you are the first person in the pew, please move to the center of the pew. Please do not immediately sit on the aisle as this causes other people to crawl over you or maneuver past you in a way that distancing becomes impossible.

Our ushers will help us to ensure that proper distancing is kept between family units. If you need assistance finding a seat, please ask them for assistance. If our ushers make a request of you, please follow their direction.

Will the Quiet Room / Cry Room be open?

No. Our quiet room is an enclosed space and does not allow for proper distancing. This area of the church will be temporarily unavailable. Please remain in the church with your children. We understand that they might be having a rough day or making some noise, but those sounds are signs of life. We are grateful that you are doing your best to raise your children in the faith and bring them to Mass. Know that you, and they, are always welcome. If you need a place to soothe your child, please feel free to step into the Narthex and join us again as soon as possible.

Will we be singing at Mass?

We will sing some of the Mass parts, but much of our music is instrumental or sung only by a cantor. We will recite most of the Mass parts for now. If you do not feel comfortable singing at this time, that is okay. Please recite the Mass parts with us.

How do I make my offering / tithe to God and the Church?

We will not take up a collection in the traditional manner during the preparation of the altar. Instead, we will have ushers at each exit at the end of Mass with a collection basket. You may place your contribution in the basket as you exit the Church following Mass, continue to mail your offering to the office, or sign up for electronic giving on our website. Thank you for your faithful stewardship to our parish.

How will I receive Holy Communion?

During the time for reception of Holy Communion, a priest, a deacon, or an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion will come to each section of the Church to distribute the Eucharist. You will remain in your place in the pew. The minister will come to you and offer Holy Communion. Please do not remove your mask until the minister approaches you. You may receive communion in a kneeling or seated position if you are unable to kneel.

If you choose to receive communion, please place your hands out flat and allow the minister to place the host in your hand. Please do not cup your hands and avoid touching the hands of the minister. We are asking everyone to receive Holy Communion in the hand.

If you choose to receive Holy Communion on the tongue, we will not refuse to distribute it in this manner. However, please open your mouth wide and stick out your tongue so that the minister can safely place the host on your tongue and avoid contact with your mouth. Please do not move your head or bite down on the host when receiving.

We hope that these procedures will help maintain the proper physical distancing and keep people from queuing up in the center aisle where distancing is difficult at best. We will amend these procedures as needed in the weeks to come.

How will I leave the Church when Mass is over?

After the final blessing, the priest(s) and the deacon will process out of the church. At this time, we will everyone to be seated. The ushers will then come and dismiss each pew starting at the back of the church. Some will exit through the main doors of the church, while others will be directed to alternate exits including the North Chapel entrance / exit. Please do not exit through the Day Chapel from the South transept.

Please exit the church immediately and do not remain after Mass to socialize with others. We will need to clear the church quickly so that we can begin to sanitize and prepare for the next Mass.