



7887 Walmsley Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70125-3496
Office: (504) 861-9521
Fax: (504) 314-9614
Email: archbishop@arch-no.org

June 1, 2020

Dear Brother Priests:

Governor Edwards announced today that on Friday, June 5, 2020 we will move into Phase II of the recovery.

This means that the number of people gathered in Church can be 50% of the occupancy, but must take into account the 6 feet social distancing. If social distancing cannot be maintained, then less than 50% of occupancy can gather. Please be careful to observe this guideline.

This formula applies to Mass, Baptisms, Funerals, Weddings, First Communion, Confirmation and any other religious service. Social distancing of 6 feet must be observed. **This does not apply to New Orleans. Mayor Cantrell will announce this week that we remain in Phase I.**

We want to do our part in preventing the virus from spreading. Please encourage people to wear masks. Ushers should do their best to enforce the 50% occupancy.

Please follow the guidelines listed below:

1. The people of the Archdiocese are dispensed from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass.
2. There is a company selling packets of Holy Water supposedly blessed by a Cardinal. This is in response to no Holy Water in the church fountains. These packets are not to be distributed in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Please consider making Holy Water available in a container that has a faucet so that people can obtain the blessed water and use it as they wish in worship.
3. A mechanism has been created to give communion and is being sold nationally. It has a cylinder where consecrated hosts are placed and a trigger (used by a priest, deacon or EMHC) releases the host into the person's hand. I find this disrespectful of the Eucharist and are not to be used in the Archdiocese of New Orleans.
4. For those who feel obliged to fulfill the Sunday obligation, a weekday Mass could accomplish this.
5. Additional Vigil Masses, Sunday and weekday Masses may be added to accommodate more people.
6. Either by computer, or by phone, people could make reservations to attend a specific Mass.
7. Family members may sit in the same pew.
8. Holy water fountains should be empty.
9. Make sure all ministers (clergy and lay) observe proper hygiene of their hands and cleanse their hands immediately before and after communion.

10. Strongly encourage people to wear a mask for Mass.
11. Regarding the celebration of Mass:
 - a. The priest, deacons and EMHC are to wear a mask at communion.
 - b. Give communion with no bodily contact. Gently let the host touch the person's hand and drop it in their hand without touching them.
 - c. Communion on the tongue is not encouraged but permitted.
 - d. The chalice with the precious blood is not to be offered.
 - e. The sign of peace can be given by bowing to the other person.
 - f. As people depart from Mass, social distancing must be observed.
12. Outdoor Masses may be celebrated and there is no maximum number of attendees, however the 6 feet rule of social distancing must be observed.
 - Please follow the guidelines of the State Fire Marshal which you received on May 3.
 - Please create a dignified environment for the celebration of the Mass.
13. Some have inquired about offering communion for those who cannot be accommodated in the church or who are fearful to gather. Communion may be offered to others after Mass. It is strongly suggested that communion not be given to those in vehicles, but outside where people can form a communion line and observe social distancing – 6 feet apart. It is better to do this in an open space rather than in a church or in cars. Please use your pastoral judgement.
14. It is suggested that liturgies are celebrated to baptize and confirm those to become Catholic as well as those who are to make a Profession of Faith in the Catholic Church. Please observe social distancing.
15. Attached please find guidelines for Summer Camps.
16. Adoration Chapels can be open but must observe social distancing.

Once again, thank you for your cooperation and understanding. If you have any questions or suggestions, please call me. You have been dedicated and creative in serving God's people during this critical time.

God's peace be with you and those you serve in his name.

Wishing you God's blessings, I am

Fraternally in Christ,



Most Reverend Gregory M. Aymond
Archbishop of New Orleans

GMA/mk

Attachments