

## **SAFETY PROTOCOLS FOR REOPENING ST. JOSEPH CHURCH TO THE FAITHFUL.**

### **STEP ONE:**

**Plan to reopen St. Joseph church for personal private prayer as early as Tuesday, June 2, 2020**

#### **Preparing the church building**

- St. Joseph Church has applied for a \$1000 grant from the City of Carpinteria to assist in the purchasing of cleaning materials.
- The cleaning materials will arrive on Friday, May 29.
- The church will receive a deep cleaning.
- Cleaning materials will remain on hand to disinfect points of contact after each visitor departs. We will be using a disinfectant that will not harm church surfaces.
- Hand sanitation will be available at the unlocked doors for all visitors.
- Signage in English and Spanish at the doors will advise people of the need to be wearing a face covering and to have clean hands before entering the church.
- In order to minimize potential points of contact: baptismal fonts and holy water containers at church entrances will be empty and hymnals and missalettes will be removed from pews.
- In adherence to the guidelines provided by the CDC, State of California, Santa Barbara County, and the City of Carpinteria regarding healthy hygiene practices, employees and volunteers will be trained in best safety and hygienic practices.
- High-risk individuals (e.g., people who are 65 and older, who are immuno-compromised or who have underlying health conditions) will be discouraged from serving in any capacity that brings them into contact with others.

#### **Welcoming the faithful to the church building**

In shifts, volunteers (or employees) will be stationed at the 2 unlocked doors of the church whenever it is open. They will be wearing face coverings and gloves.

The volunteers will perform the following duties:

- Greet all visitors.
- Advise people to return home if they are experiencing symptoms or are considered at higher risk
- Remind visitors to wash/sanitize their hands and wear a face covering.
- Open the door for visitors to keep the points of contact to a minimum.
- Count visitors as they enter, to ensure that the number of visitors at any given time does not exceed 25 for personal prayer.
- Remind visitors to maintaining social distancing and refrain from touching any objects in the church.
- Ensure that pews and other points of contact are wiped down when visitors leave.

Charity and understanding are asked of all the faithful during this time.

## **STEP TWO:**

Offering **Mass, Confessions, the Sacraments of Initiation, and religious celebrations** for families

### **Mass**

#### ***Communication***

Plans for reopening and safety protocols will be posted on the St. Joseph Website, sent out through social media, flocknotes, etc.

#### ***Church Preparation for Mass***

1. The staff will prepare an instructional Power Point presentation outlining the process below so that the faithful will know the protocols expected of them while attending Mass.
2. The liturgical musicians will prepare a PowerPoint presentation containing all the prayers, readings, and songs for Mass.
3. The maintenance man and volunteers will disinfect the pews.
4. The staff will then mark seating spots (marking off the non-available spots), place marks at 6-foot spacing for communion lines, and place baskets for the collection at the location in each aisle where an usher will be standing with hand sanitizer.
5. The staff will place safety signage about face coverings, social distancing, and good hand hygiene at the doors of the Church.

#### ***Home Preparation for Mass***

The faithful will be asked to bring a face covering and hand sanitizer from home. (Some of these will be available at the church for those who may inadvertently forget.)

#### ***Arriving at Church***

1. The faithful will be instructed to put on their face-coverings as they leave their cars.
2. Two lines will be formed: one along the sidewalk of Linden Ave and the other along the sidewalk of El Carro Lane. These lines will lead to the front doors of the Church. These two front doors will be the only doors available for entry.
3. Signage and likely yellow caution tape will be posted on all other doors of the church directing the faithful to get in line on the sidewalks for entry.
4. As the faithful approach, they will be reminded of the effort to keep one another safe, to wear face coverings and to maintain social distance.
5. The faithful will be asked to wash/sanitize their hands prior to entry.
6. No more than 100 people will be allowed into the church. When capacity is reached, those still in line will be reminded that
  - the general dispensation from the Sunday obligation to attend Mass remains in place.
  - people in vulnerable populations are encouraged to stay home.
  - safety is most important and therefore there is the need for a smaller congregation.
  - live-streaming of Mass remains available.

#### ***In the Church***

1. Ushers will direct the faithful to their places, which will be 6 feet apart from one another. (Family units from the same house may sit together without social distance)
2. All music and prayers will be on the screens. For safety sake, the faithful will be asked to hum along with the liturgical music but told that the safest behavior is to keep their mouths closed.

3. The faithful will be invited to drop their donations into the collection baskets while they are coming forward for Holy Communion. These baskets will be near the usher who will be squirting hand sanitizer into the hands of each communicant. The faithful will be asked first to drop their donation into the collection basket, and then to sanitize their hands. (We will offer a squirt if the faithful don't have their own personal bottle.)
4. Ushers will monitor that the faithful are keeping their face coverings on and maintaining 6 feet distance from one another in the communion lines.
5. For the Communion process:
  - The priests and deacon will wear face coverings.
  - The priests and deacon will sanitize their hands prior to the distribution of Holy Communion.
  - The faithful will receive communion in the hand only.
  - The faithful will leave their face coverings on as they receive communion from the priest or deacon.
  - The faithful will then be asked to step 6 feet to the side. Remove their face covering and consume the host, whereupon they will be expected put the face covering back on and return to their pew.
  - The priests and deacons will sanitize their hands following the distribution of Holy Communion.

### ***Leaving Church***

1. At the end of Mass: The faithful will be asked to follow the directions of the ushers who will dismiss them row by row. Half out the front right-side door, and the other half out the front left-side door.
2. The faithful will be reminded to keep their face coverings on and not to congregate outside.
3. They will be instructed to go to their cars and depart safely for home.

### ***In Between Masses***

Volunteers will disinfect/wash pews where people may have been. They will also wash handrails leading into church.

\*                    \*                    \*                    \*                    \*                    \*

### **Baptism**

1. The celebration of Baptism and First Holy Communion will resume. The protocols for Mass above will apply, especially regarding the limit of 100 people, hand sanitizing, face coverings, and social distancing.
2. Initially, we will not use our normal immersion font. In fact, it will not have any water in it. We will pour blessed water into smaller containers, and each person will be baptized with water poured from a different container. The water will not be reused.
3. For Infant Baptisms: The use of the Oil of Catechumens and the “Ephphatha” rite will be omitted.

### **Confirmation**

We will wait for further direction from the Regional Bishop’s Office regarding the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation for our teen and adult candidates. We do not have a date at this time.

### **Confessions**

1. Regularly scheduled confessions will resume. Initially, confessions will take place outdoors. The priest and the penitent will both wear face coverings and remain standing. Strict social distancing will be observed.
2. The location will be such that the privacy of the seal of confession may be maintained.
3. Subsequent penitents may wait inside the church while maintaining a safe social distance of at least 6 feet from anyone else waiting for confession. The priest will come to the church door to indicate to the next penitent that it is their turn.

### **Family Celebrations**

**Weddings, Funerals, and Quinceañeras** will resume. The protocols for Mass above will apply, especially regarding the limit of 100 people, hand sanitizing, face-coverings, and social distancing.