

11 Points to Consider

before Returning to Public Worship

- 1. Catholics will continue to be dispensed from Sunday Mass and Holy Day Masses While public Masses will resume, vulnerable populations, the elderly, and those with underlying health conditions are asked to follow the most up to date health regulations and remain at home. There are many who might feel uncomfortable returning to Mass. They, too, have legitimate reason to remain at home. Bishop Tobin has extended the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass and Holy Day Masses until further notice.**
- 2. Access to Mass will be limited In order to prevent risk of infection, attendance at Mass will be limited to a percentage of the church's capacity as specified in the fire code. Some parishes will utilize a "call ahead", "online reservation", or "ticket" system, or find other ways to split up parishioners so as to give all those who desire to do so the opportunity to attend Mass in as equitable a manner as possible.**
- 3. Hand hygiene and masks are key Parishioners will be expected to sanitize their hands immediately upon entry to the church. Likewise, they must wear a mask at all times, with the exception of receiving Holy Communion.**
- 4. Pews will be sectioned off In order to maintain six feet distance between parishioners, parishes will mark off sections of pews where parishioners can safely sit.**
- 5. Singing will be limited Because of the risk of infection due to increased aerosolized particles, singing must be limited. Hymnals will be removed from churches.**
- 6. Parishioners will have the opportunity to receive Holy Communion in a safe manner Parishioners will take off their masks to receive Holy Communion, but the priest or other minister may wear a mask when distributing Holy Communion. The priest or other minister will always sanitize his hands before this time, and whenever he accidentally comes into contact with a person. Parishioners are encouraged to receive Holy Communion on the hand; but another option would be to refrain from receiving Holy Communion and make an act of spiritual communion instead.**
- 7. The church will be sanitized after every Mass To ensure everyone's safety,**

parish staff or volunteers will sanitize commonly touched surfaces and pews before and after every celebration of Mass.

8. Any weekly budget envelopes and offerings will be dropped in a box prior to Mass or as you leave. Instead of "passing the basket," a secure receptacle should be available so parishioners can drop off their budget envelopes before or after Mass.

9. Avoid personal contact with anyone. The sign of peace remains suspended; physical contact must be avoided at all costs.

10. Windows will be open and air conditioning/climate control might remain off.

11. Those who are sick must stay home. Anyone who has symptoms of any sickness (even mild symptoms) may not attend the public celebration of Mass.

Taken from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence – Returning to Mass in time of COVID-19.