



## Diocese of Harrisburg

### Phases for Restoration of Public Worship

*Revised May 25, 2020 – Revisions in italics.*

For the movement from Red to Yellow, Yellow to Green, the new provisions begin the second weekend after the date announced for transition by the Governor. The date will be indicated by the Office of the Bishop. *Some counties may receive permission through a request made by the dean to begin sooner than the proscribed date.* This will give opportunity for parishes to publicize and to prepare properly for the changes. If a county reverts to a previous phase, the reverted changes are effective on the Governor's effective date. These directives are subject to revision at any time by the Bishop and in accord with Statewide directives.

	<b>RED PHASE</b>	<b>YELLOW PHASE</b>	<b>GREEN PHASE</b>
<b>Churches and chapels</b>			To be determined when indications are given by the State of Pennsylvania.
1. Hours of Operation	Closed to the public.	At the discretion of the pastor, churches may be open for restricted hours. Monitoring of who accesses the building and proper sanitization will be easier with limited hours.	
2. Entrances	Closed to the public.	Establish a limited handicap-accessible entrance. Not all entrance doors of the church should be used in order to maintain control over number of entrants. A sign should be posted at the entrance dissuading those who are sick or experiencing symptoms from entry.	
3. Doors	Closed to the public	Interior and exterior doors should be propped open, whenever possible, in order to prevent unneeded contact and allow for greater ventilation.	
4. Space delineation and pews	Closed to the public	Within the church, each parish is to use tape or ropes to create a restricted use of space for those	

		entering for private prayer. This may include the general space of the church as well as pews. Six feet is the standard for spacing between individuals/families. It is not necessary that the entire church be accessible. This is to help reduce the area needing to be sanitized.	
5. Sanitization Requirements	A deep cleaning of the entire church property is recommended.	Sanitization of public spaces is to occur after each gathering (for Mass or other liturgical celebrations) as well as at the close of day. Careful to avoid damage to wooden pews and other surfaces, pews should be wiped down with light soap and water (most pews will be damaged by harsh astringents). Door handles, doors, railings and the cleaning of bathrooms should follow CDC guidelines for sanitizing.	
6. Occupancy	Closed to the public.	In order to provide proper social distancing, fewer than 1/3 of total church occupancy may occupy the church at a given time (this number is your church's total seating capacity divided by three). Religious spaces are not held to the minimum number for gatherings established for businesses. <i>See Appendix 5 for clarification.</i>	
7. Ventilation	Well ventilated with fresh air.	Each church is to be well ventilated with fresh air. Windows and doors are	

		be opened, whenever possible. Using HVAC and fans air is to be circulating.	
8. Holy Water	All fonts and stoops are emptied.	All fonts and stoops remain emptied. Small bottles of Holy Water may be provided for individuals to take and bring with them when visiting.	
9. Veneration of relics and images	Closed to the public.	Public veneration by making physical contact with relics and images is prohibited. Relics and images should be out of reach for the general public.	
10. Hymnals and other books	Closed to the public.	All hymnals, missals, missalettes, and Bibles are to be removed from churches and stored until a later date. For public worship, printed worship aids and projection screens are to be used when needed. The printed worship aids are to be used once and discarded by the user in receptacles as they leave the church.	
11. Book racks and kiosks	Closed to the public.	All public kiosks for distribution of books, devotional materials, and sacramentals are to be closed off from public access. They are to be removed or covered to prevent access. If a parish has a religious goods store or sells religious goods, this activity is suspended.	
12. Votive candles	Closed to the public.	Access to lighting votive candles is to be restricted from the public. Parishioners may request the pastoral staff to light a candle for them.	
13. Sacristy	Closed to the public.	Because sacristies are confined spaces, often with limited ventilation	

		and room, only clergy should use the sacristy. A sacristan may enter but leave after retrieving what is necessary. For all public Masses, any assisting ministers should wait in a public space outside the sacristy as indicated by the pastor.	
14. Cry Room/Nursery	Closed to the public.	Closed to the public.	
15. Sacred vessels	Properly purified and sanitized according to proper practice.	Vessels are to be properly purified and sanitized according to norms. Care is to be taken not to damage vessels with harsh chemicals or scrubbing. Often, a warm water with a little soap is sufficient.	
16. Cleaning of sacred linens	Linens should be cleaned by the priests during this time.	Gloves should be worn by those who launder the linens, proper precaution needs to be taken if linens are removed from property and taken to private homes.	
17. Vestments	If multiple priests/deacons are in a parish, they should avoid sharing chasubles and stoles. No albs may be shared. This is an appropriate time to launder all albs and dry clean vestments.	If multiple priests/deacons are in a parish, they should avoid sharing chasubles and stoles. No albs may be shared. Albs should be regularly laundered. Chasubles should be dry cleaned, if possible, or steam cleaned.	
18. Use of daily Mass chapels	At discretion of the pastor, the daily Mass chapel may be used alternatively to the main church.	For public Masses, the main church space is to be used instead of daily Mass chapels in order to provide the opportunity for greater social distancing. When the main church is incapable of providing a safe space	

		for social distancing, parish halls may be used.	
19. Perpetual Adoration Chapels	Closed to the public.	At the discretion of the pastor, adoration chapels may be open with strict restrictions on hours and occupancy, following strict sanitization after each visitor. Since the spaces are small, only those assigned should be admitted during given periods. A sign-up system would be beneficial.	
20. Use of churches for other purposes, i.e. concerts, presentations, etc.	Closed to the public.	Churches may not be used for public concerts, presentations, or non-liturgical use during this time.	
<b>Persons in Attendance</b>			
1. Face masks (Clergy)	Not to be worn during the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy.	Face masks are not to be worn by clergy during the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy. Face masks must be worn during the distribution of Holy Communion after Mass and outside of Mass.	
2. Face masks (Laity)	Closed to the public.	Face masks are to be worn by all lay faithful who attend Mass. Face masks are to be removed when a lector proclaims the readings and for the reception of Holy Communion. A cantor, who is separated by a good distance from the assembly may participate without a face mask.	
3. Gloves (Ministers)	Not to be worn during the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy.	Gloves are not to be worn during the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy. Gloves should not be used either the distribution or reception of Holy Communion.	

4. Sanitizer Stations	Closed to the public.	Stations with hand sanitizer should be in place at the entrance of the church, in the sacristy, at the credence table, and at the location for distribution of Holy Communion.	
5. Social distancing	Closed to the public.	Social distancing is to be practiced within church buildings. Using rope or tape (be sure to use a material that does not damage pews), indications should be made for sitting in every third pew with six feet between individuals. Families may sit together. Spacing should take into account the size of families attending together.	
6. Gathering before/after Mass	Closed to the public.	All formal and informal gatherings before or after Mass are strictly prohibited in the church and at the entrances.	
7. Deacons	Closed to the public.	Deacons may serve at discretion of the pastor and the deacon.	
8. Altar Servers	Closed to the public.	Altar servers may not serve during this time.	
9. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion	Closed to the public	Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may not serve at this time. *Unless needed because the priest is compromised/at risk. Please consult the Office for Divine Worship if this is needed.	
10. Lectors	A single lector is permitted, but not required, at the discretion of the pastor.	A single lector is permitted, but not required, at the discretion of the pastor.	
11. Choirs	Closed to the public.	Choirs are not permitted. Choir practices are not to take place.	

12. Cantor	A cantor is permitted at discretion of Pastor.	A cantor is permitted at discretion of pastor. It is preferable that the cantor be stationed away from the assembly, in a choir loft or in the rear of the church at a sizeable distance from others.	
13. Organist/Pianist/Guitarist	A musician is permitted at discretion of Pastor.	A musician is permitted at discretion of pastor.	
14. Ushers/Greeters	Closed to the public.	A limited number of ushers/greeters to help direct the assembly as they enter and leave may be necessary. This is left to the discretion of the pastor.	
15. Controlled entrance into churches for Masses.	Closed to the public.	You may wish to use a system to determine those who are permitted to enter into the church for Mass. Some form of ticketing or sign-up may help in those parishes where large numbers of the faithful will want to return to churches for Mass.	
<b>Sunday Mass/Weekday Mass</b>			
1. Schedule of Mass	Closed to the public.	At the discretion of the pastor, Mass schedules for Sundays and weekdays may be adjusted according to need. If the full schedule is resumed, all of the requirements for sanitation after each Mass is mandatory. It may be helpful to begin with a reduced number of Masses to ensure proper cleaning can take place. Masses may take place in churches, church halls that have been properly suited for the needs of this time, outdoor, and in parking lots,	

		even with people remaining in their cars.	
2. Offertory Collection	Omitted.	No offering may be taken up by pew. Baskets are to be set up in a secure place for individuals to use as needed. They should not be placed at entrances or any other location that risks thievery.	
3. Placement of the bread and wine on the altar for consecration.	As needed.	At the altar, all vessels containing sacred hosts for distribution to others are to be covered with palls or purificators, remaining so during the entire Eucharistic prayer. The consecration is not impeded by covering. They are to be placed on a secondary corporal toward the side of the altar. Only the principal chalice and the celebrant's host should remain in front of the celebrant. With the use of a secondary chalice, concelebrants and deacons are to be communicated by means of intinction.	
4. Sign of Peace	Omitted	Omitted.	
5. Holy Communion	Omitted.	Only the priest(s) and deacon(s) are to receive Holy Communion during the public celebration of Mass. The faithful are invited to receive Holy Communion after Mass following the guidelines that have been provided below.	
6. Reception of Holy Communion by the Faithful	In extremis only.	Holy Communion may be received in the hand or on the tongue, with encouragement of the Faithful to	



		receive in the hand for greater caution. No one is to be refused Holy Communion for their preference of reception.	
7. Holy Communion Outside of Mass	In extremis only.	Opportunities for the reception of Holy Communion Outside of Mass may take place, provided all the precautions are taken as listed above for sanitization and social distancing. For instance, a parish may establish a time on a Sunday afternoon when the church will be opened or a place outside the church is designated for the Faithful to come and receive Holy Communion.	
8. <i>Congregational singing</i>	<i>Closed to the public.</i>	<i>Many studies have noted concern about congregational singing as a hazard since singing appears to be an easy way of aerosolization. Congregational singing should be limited. Music led by a cantor and organist is sufficient to support the sacred action.</i>	
<b>Confessions</b>			
1. In church buildings	Closed to the public.	Hearing confessions in churches may resume in a well-ventilated area. Confessionals are often too confined and unsafe. A place within the church may be set up ensuring privacy and necessary health precautions. Proper signs and directions for penitents should be used to maintain social	

		distancing for those waiting in line. Priests are to wear masks, unless a protective barrier makes this unnecessary.	
2. In alternative spaces	Always in extremis. By request in safe locations utilizing personal safety measures.	The creative means of hearing confessions, such as an outdoor station, is highly recommended and preferred to enclosed spaces. A place may be set up ensuring privacy. Proper signs and directions for penitents should be used to maintain social distancing for those waiting in line. Priests are to wear masks, unless a protective barrier makes this unnecessary.	
<b>Anointing of the Sick</b>			
	In extremis only utilizing personal safety measures.	As needed using a cotton ball for anointing and omitting the laying on of hands. Cotton balls are to be safely set aside in a bag after use and then burned. No communal celebrations of anointing of the sick may take place.	
<b>Visitation of the Sick</b>			
	In extremis only.	Visitation of the sick may resume provided extreme caution is exercised and all the proper recommendations from the CDC are followed. Masks must be worn and social distancing maintained in homes. <i>Visitation is recommended outside of homes, if possible.</i>	

<b>Infant Baptism</b>			
	All Baptisms of infants are to be postponed.	Baptisms may resume outside of Mass. Only one infant/family per celebration with proper social distancing and masks required by those attending. Water must be fresh and changed after each Baptism. Cotton balls are used for anointing(s) and burned after use. <i>Written permission may be obtained from Bishop Gainer to celebrate infant Baptisms at private residents. This permission is gained by writing a letter to Bishop Gainer. In these circumstances, social distancing must be maintained. It is preferable to be done outdoors.</i>	
<b>First Holy Communion</b>			
	Postponed.	Pastors are to reschedule this according to their discretion making use of individual opportunities for children to receive at weekend Masses as well as weekdays.	
<b>Confirmations</b>			
	Postponed.	Bishop Gainer extends the faculty to all priests in the Diocese of Harrisburg to confirm until December 31, 2020. For the anointing with Sacred Chrism one cotton ball is to be used for each confirmand, then placed in a paper bag to be burned afterwards.	

<b>Weddings</b>			
	If possible, postponed. Otherwise, permitted with the maximum number permitted by the government norms. All present must wear masks.	Weddings may resume, with maximum occupancy and protective measures indicated above. All regulations for Sunday/Weekday Masses are to be followed. <i>Bishop Gainer is amenable to requests for Nuptial Masses outdoors. This is obtained through writing.</i>	
<b>Funerals</b>			
	Graveside committals only. Memorial Masses to take place at later date.	Funerals may resume, with maximum occupancy and protective measures indicated above. All regulations for Sunday/Weekday Masses are to be followed. <i>Funeral Masses may take place at outdoor chapels on cemetery grounds.</i>	
<b>Christian Initiation of Adults</b>			
	Postponed.	The celebration of Christian Initiation of Adults may be scheduled at any time, even weekdays, at the discretion of the Pastor. All maximum occupancy requirements and precautions indicated above are to be observed. The rite for full initiation of catechumens follows the ritual for Easter Vigil, using the Mass of the Day if occurring on a Sunday or Solemnity, or a ritual Mass (#3 For the Conferral of Baptism).	

<b>Exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament</b>			
	Closed to the public.	Periods of Exposition and Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament may occur at the discretion of the pastor. All precautions for Sunday/Weekday Masses are to be maintained.	
<b>Forty Hours</b>			
	Closed to the public.	It is recommended that parish celebrations of Solemn Eucharistic Devotions be postponed or cancelled.	

## **Appendix 1: Distribution of Holy Communion After Mass**

Following the recommendations of the Thomistic Institute, whenever Mass is celebrated publicly with an assembly in the Yellow Phase, the distribution of Holy Communion will happen after Mass has concluded. This ensures the possibility of proper instruction, social distancing, sanitary conditions for distribution, and leaves space for those who do not feel comfortable receiving Holy Communion at this time.

- After his reception of Holy Communion (and that of the other clergy present), the priest places the vessel with the consecrated hosts for distribution into the tabernacle. The vessel should not remain on the altar. Mass then continues and is concluded.
- After the Dismissal or after the final hymn, following the norms for these, the priest may return to the sacristy or to the presidential chair to remove his chasuble and don a face mask. An alb should be worn. Gloves should not be worn.
- A small table with hand sanitizer, an ablution cup, and a purificator is set up at the location for distribution of Holy Communion.
- The assembly forms a communion procession using the norm of 6 feet between communicants.
- Since this is the reception of Holy Communion out of Mass, the priest begins the distribution of Holy Communion with, “Behold, the Lamb of God . . .” The people make the response, “Lord, I am not worthy.”
- Each communicant approaches to receive Holy Communion with their mask lowered. They may receive in the hand or on the tongue, as permitted by the law of the Church. No one is to be refused or publicly rebuked for their choice. Although, priests may encourage the careful reception of Holy Communion on the hand as a preference.
- The priest (or, whoever is distributing), should purify and sanitize his hands as often as he thinks it is necessary. This is not necessary after each person. It is necessary if contact has been suspected. Or, if a communicant requests it.
- Those who have received Holy Communion may be permitted to make a thanksgiving after reception.
- The priest reposes the Blessed Sacrament into the tabernacle and, after using the ablution cup, proceeds to the sacristy where he washes his hands thoroughly with soap and warm water.

## **Appendix 2: Purification and Cleaning of Sacred Vessels**

Sacred vessels should be purified and properly sanitized. While the purification happens after each use, a thorough sanitization is needed only periodically if the vessel is used by only one priest. For vessels used by multiple priests and those that come in contact with sacristans and others, purification and cleaning should happen after each use.

Be careful to avoid damaging precious metals by using harsh astringents and cleaners. Instruction for care of your vessel may be available from the manufacturer. If not, a light washing with warm, soap water should be sufficient. In some cases, it is possible to use a diluted solution of rubbing alcohol on a

cotton ball to wipe the brim and inside of the cup. Gentle washing will prevent damage that occurs through vigorous scrubbing. Since vessels differ, please consult the manufacturer for cleaning, if possible.

### **Appendix 3: Proper Sanitation of Church Spaces**

While the CDC does not specify exactly how church spaces are to be sanitized, within the Diocese of Harrisburg you are asked to follow the rules for businesses as best as possible. This includes regular sanitation of bathrooms, door handles, and other high contact places. Pews should be cleaned according to the care instructions proper to their make. In most cases, certain cleansers damage the wood and should be avoided. Warm, lightly soapy water is often the best course of care.

### **Appendix 4: Masses in social halls and outdoor**

Whenever Masses are held in social halls or outdoor, masks and social distancing are required. Numbers should be limited in the Yellow Phase with respect to any government directives.

When Masses occur in parking lots with parishioners remaining in their vehicles, either the vehicles must be spaced widely apart or parishioners should wear masks while in their vehicles. Holy Communion may take place one car at a time – with the car driving to a place set apart and the individuals leaving the vehicle to receive Holy Communion. As a rule, Holy Communion should not be taken to cars and distributed to occupants inside.

### **Appendix 5: Clarification Email to Priests from May 9, 2020**

There are a few points of clarification I would like to share with you based on questions that have been asked:

- 1.) Governor Wolf never formally closed any church or forbade any public worship. He asked for the cooperation of religious leaders to submit voluntarily to the directives issued by his Office. Bishop Gainer, in consultation with the other bishops of Pennsylvania, made the decision to close churches and suspend public worship for the Diocese of Harrisburg as an expression of prudence and concern for the Faithful and with respect to the Governor's authority. We continue to respect and follow that approach of compliance.
- 2.) Dr Levine spoke with Pennsylvania religious leaders at a Zoom meeting on Tuesday morning. Bishop Gainer participated in this meeting. Dr Levine reiterated that churches were not being held to the same standard as businesses or public gatherings but cautioned against charting their own path forward outside the guidelines. Currently, the guidelines permit 50% occupancy for businesses and 25 persons for social gatherings. For churches, there is no occupancy limit given

explicitly. The 1/3 occupancy, as determined by Bishop Gainer for our churches, is well within the limits established by the Commonwealth. We are not defying any orders by allowing this to happen in those churches that can fulfill the safety requirements for cleaning and social distancing.

3.) Each pastor has the discretion when the transition occurs according to the direction of Governor Wolf's Office to decide how he can carefully open his parish church and resume some level of public worship. [Note: This is not followed when counties go rogue in declaring themselves in the Yellow Phase.] The counties are large with our parishes spanning quite a distance. Each parish situation is unique. Therefore, each parish has to wrestle with the challenges of sanitation, public safety, and as well as the health and vulnerability of the pastor and his parishioners. I advise that consultation with Pastoral Staff and parish leadership be a part of the decision-making process. Some may choose not to open. Some may choose to open and not offer public Mass. Such options are within the pastor's authority to decide in these matters. Pastors may not choose to exceed the limits established by government and diocesan directives.

4.) I mistakenly omitted Infant Baptisms in the chart - [Yellow Phase] they are to follow the protocol in place for occupancy and PPE. No baptisms may occur during Mass at this time. Only one child (or family if there are siblings) may be baptized at each ceremony. Cotton balls are to be used for anointing and fresh water is to be used at every baptism.