



MEMORANDUM

TO: Priests of the Archdiocese

FROM: Most Rev. Salvatore J. Cordileone
Archbishop of San Francisco

DATE: October 2, 2020
Memorial of the Guardian Angels

RE: Reopening for public Masses, part 9

As you are aware, last Tuesday Mayor Breed announced that houses of worship in San Francisco would be opened for indoor worship up to 25% capacity or a maximum of 100 people, whichever is less. Many thanks to all of you who have helped with our public witness under the banner, “We are Essential Free the Mass,” and those of you who promoted signing the petition (38,000 and counting) at [FreeTheMass.com/QueremosLaMisa.com](https://www.freethemass.com/QueremosLaMisa.com). There are still some remaining problems with the treatment of public worship (most notably, a numerical maximum limit regardless of the size of the house of worship, a rule which does not apply to other comparable activities). Nonetheless, we can take encouragement knowing that when we speak with one voice, our voice will be heard.

Returning to indoor worship in no way minimizes the importance of following the safety protocols of the Archdiocese. These were slightly revised last August, and below you will find a link to the latest version. The four principal practices remain in place: social distancing, masks, sanitation, and ventilation (opening doors and windows). The most noticeable of the changes is allowing for Holy Communion to be distributed during the normal time during Mass, provided hand sanitation prior to and the wearing of face coverings during the distribution is observed. As these safety protocols are designed for all three counties of our Archdiocese, and since indoor worship is now being conducted in all three counties, it is important that you be aware of any requirements particular to the health orders of the county in which you are serving.*

The safety protocols of the Archdiocese are the same basic protocols being followed by dioceses throughout the United States, and as three major infectious disease specialists noted after reviewing the data, these protocols work. Not a single COVID outbreak has been traced to Mass attendance where these protocols are observed. Below you will find a link giving information on this study. Please continue to remind your parishioners that those who are sick should not attend Mass, even if it’s “just a cold” and they feel well enough to attend, and that the dispensation from the Sunday Mass obligation remains in place. The elderly and others at high risk from COVID, as well as those who care for them, should remain at home and may do so in good conscience.

Addressee

Date

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The return to indoor worship happily coincides with the feast day of our Archdiocese, which we have the great joy to celebrate on a Sunday this year (for us, the Solemnity of St. Francis takes precedence over the 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time). On the Vigil of the Solemnity (October 3), in observance of St. Francis' *transitus*, a thanksgiving procession will be held starting from St. Anthony parish in the Mission at 6:00pm and concluding at the Cathedral, where Mass will be celebrated on the plaza at 7:00pm followed by a candlelight rosary. I will lead the procession and celebrate the Mass. More information is available in the link below. Please join us if you are able.

Thank you for your perseverance in these challenging times.

Safety Protocols updated August 14:

<https://d2y1pz2y630308.cloudfront.net/17184/documents/2020/8/CoronaVirus.ADSFsafetyprotocol-Mass-2%201.pdf>

Letter on the evidence-based safety of our protocols by three infectious disease specialists:

https://www.realclearscience.com/articles/2020/08/19/evidence-based_guidelines_to_celebrate_mass_safely_are_working.html

Information on Oct 3 Vigil Feast of St. Francis: Procession, Mass, Candlelight Rosary:

<https://sfarchdiocese.org/events/rosaryrally>

*At 9b3iv in Appendix C-2, the San Francisco Health Order states the following with regard to religious services: "A Face Covering is not required: when eating or drinking; or if a faith leader determines it is essential to a ritual or ceremony that Face Coverings be removed, subject to limitations listed in the directive". Common sense should be applied in observing this order.