



## *Most Holy Trinity Parish*

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An Arizona Non-profit Corporation

520.884.9021

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Tucson, AZ 85745

### **Most Holy Trinity – Procedures for Masses, Phase 2**

Dear Friends,

We have been through a lot during these past few months. We have struggled to make sense of this pandemic while trying to protect each other and our families. On October 3<sup>rd</sup> we will finally begin phase 2 of a three-phase process of reopening masses at Most Holy Trinity. The decision on starting **phase 2, as with phase 1** was made in close coordination with Bishop Weisenburger and in compliance with the Center of Disease Control (CDC) standards. The protocols that I am outlining to you for our parish is a result of this coordination and consultation. **Based on what we know, phase 2 will formalize our move back into the church for worship.**

Since late March we at Most Holy Trinity have been working out every detail of reopening the parish. We have studied other parishes, worked closely with the diocese while testing out a series of options that demonstrates the safest options for your return to mass. I can say that we now meet the necessary requirements for phase 2 based on diocesan policy as outlined in the **“Change of Covid-19 Protocols, General Instructions for Pastors”** and the recommendations of the CDC. We have also aligned ourselves with the standards for school and business reopening as outlined by the Arizona Department of Health Services. It is these standards that has allowed us to resume some liturgies in the church.

#### **Important considerations for you to continue to make**

While we are doing everything that is reasonable to provide a safe environment, there is an inherent risk, regardless of age or health, in attending any public event. This includes religious services. While we are working to reduce the risk, there are no risk-free situations. Your attendance at any public event constitutes your understanding and acceptance of the essential level of risk. Therefore, because of the risks involved, if you are 65 or older and dealing with any threatening health condition, **we continue encourage you to stay home** and continue celebrating the mass at home via our online mass. During **phase 2** we will continue to offer online liturgies and offer the reception of communion in front of the church from 9 am until 11am each Sunday for those who wish to watch the mass at home and receive the eucharist.

If you are living with an at-risk person in your home, we encourage you to stay home. If you feel uncomfortable and fearful of attending mass, **rest assured that Bishop**

## **Weisenburger has dispensed Sunday obligation for everyone until further notice.**

Therefore, do not feel guilty for not attending mass during phase 2.

### **Phase 2 Reopening**

**Phase 2** will be similar in many ways to what we are doing now.

Under **Phase 2** we will continue to limit the number of parishioners to make sure that safe social distancing will be followed at all times. Seating, especially in the church, will continue to be assigned for the foreseeable future in order to maintain a safe distance. We will continue to celebrate one mass outside each weekend. Recently we have received permission from Bishop Weisenburger to allow our mariachi group to begin their music at MHT. Under the guidelines set forth by Bishop Weisenburger we can have our mariachi group celebrate with us at our outside mass with the requirements they maintain social distancing and perform without trumpets. Therefore our outdoors mass will be the mariachi mass.

Early in the pandemic we learned that the safest place for a group of people to congregate was outside of an enclosed space where air can flow freely. However, with the reduction of cases and in compliance with AZDH and CDC guidelines we have begun to celebrate a number of liturgies in the church. This will continue under phase 2. Listed below are the mass schedules for phase 2

### **Saturday**

4 pm church with reservation

### **Sunday**

7:30 am church with reservation. **(For the safety of our most vulnerable population, 65 years and older only)**

11 :30 pm – church with reservation

6 pm – mariachi mass with reservation

As we watch the attendance we will learn if we need to add or subtract a mass.

### **Procedures for phase 2**

1. At this time, we can only allow 30 placements in the church. A placement equals a single person, a couple or a family of no more than 3 persons including the driver. This is required to maintain social distancing.
2. **All attendance will continue be based on an online reservation system.** Reservations must be made if you wish to attend mass. You can make a reservation via our website or you can also call Mr. Steve McManus, our reservation coordinator, at 520-427-4488 and he will be happy to assist you.

- a. Once you receive your reservation you will receive a confirmation via email and for in church mass and a seat assignment. These assignments are designed to make sure that we do not overload a pew and maintain safe distancing.
  - b. Again, a reservation can represent one individual, a couple or small family.
  - c. *(Small family = no more than people in the church at a time including driver)*
  - d. Please make sure you attend the mass specified for your reservation and take only the seat that has been assigned you.
  - e. When you arrive at the main entrance, an usher will check for your reservation and direct you to the safest entrance that is closet to your seat.
  - f. You will notice that the church is divided into 4 sections based on color: Blue, Green, Red and Yellow. Seating is numbered in each section. Entry location and exits will be based on the section you are assigned.
3. If you are feeling ill, do not attend mass. I.E., No temperatures, or other signs of illness.
  4. Participants and families will be spaced 9 to 15ft from other families or individuals. A designation sign with a seating number will be placed on each assigned location.
  5. All participants **MUST** wear a mask while on the property until you return to your vehicle. Children under the age of 6 will be exempt per CDC guidelines. ***The mask requirement is designed, not to protect you but to protect your fellow parishioners.***
  6. After your car is parked, proceed under the front door arch, sanitize your hands and walk to your assigned entrance and seating.

### **Outdoor Mass**

Out door mass will continue to follow the save protocol that was started during phase 1

1. Ushers will assign seats during **Phase 2** to ensure proper social distancing. If you are a couple or a small family, you may bring your own lawn or camping chair and place it directly next to your assigned chair if that makes you comfortable. We will have extra chairs available. However, if you bring your own camping or lawn chair, you must take it home with you.
2. You will remain in your seats throughout the liturgy.

### **General info for all masses**

1. There will be no hymnals or missalettes until further notice.
2. There will be no Holy Water available until further notice.
3. Music will be meditative only. We have learned that singing can increase the risk of spreading the virus.

4. During the liturgy there will be no sign of peace. You can acknowledge each other with a simple bow.
5. Due to the reality of our building the Holy Eucharist will continue to be offered to you as you leave the worship space, not during the mass.
6. Collections will continue to be received in baskets at the exits of the church
7. We will direct you, as to how to leave and receive Eucharist in order to keep social distancing.
- 8. Initial procedure for reception of Eucharist during phase II:**
  - a. As you leave your section in the church you will see the communion distribution area. It will have a table with a donation basket to support the parish and a hand sanitizing bottle. This will be approximately 20 feet from the Eucharistic Ministers.
  - b. While in line, follow the line markings and orange cones to maintain a safe distance. Distance = 10ft.
  - c. Before approaching the Eucharistic Minister, please use the hand sanitizer to wash hands.
  - d. Eucharist Ministers will serve the Eucharist in the hands only. **No serving on the tongue under any circumstances.** The precious blood will not be served until further notice.
  - e. Keep Mask on when receiving Eucharist and do not consume the Eucharist in front of the Eucharistic Minister's face.
9. Upon reception of the Eucharist, we ask you to return to your vehicle and leave the parish parking lot immediately. Do not linger in the parking lot.
10. Finally, because of restrictions and age, I will not be able serve you Eucharist or greet you in the usual MHT way. This continues to pain me greatly. However, please understand that this is temporary and that you are constantly in our thoughts and prayers.

### **Future reception of the Eucharist**

If we see a continuation reduction of infection during the early part of October we will begin the process of receiving Eucharist in the church during mass. Under this process you will remain in your pews and the eucharist will be brought to you. There will continue to be no communion lines during phase 2. We will keep you informed as to our progress in this area.

Please note however, until we reach phase 3, and only with permission of the bishop we will not be serving the precious blood or serving eucharist on the tongue.

### **Sacrament of Penance**

As in phase 1 we will continue to offer the sacrament of penance outside in the front of the church from your car or truck. The “drive by” confessions have worked very well and we will continue to follow this process until phase 3. During this time, we will be exploring a better location for the sacrament that will be safe for celebrations in the building. As always you can call for a private appointment for the sacrament.

## **Weddings and Funerals**

Weddings and funerals are special moments in the life of a parish. Because of this we need to continue to celebrate these important events in the life of the parish and the families involved in a safe and secure way.

### **Weddings**

Wedding will follow the protocol of the weekend mass as it relates to the number of people attending, social distancing and mask wearing. The wedding couple will be on the alter facing the community at as safe distance. The wedding party will remain in their pews throughout the liturgy except for the best man and maid of honor who have important duties during the celebration. We will have a limit of 30 people at the liturgy including the bridal party.

A procession and entrance of the bride is a special part of the liturgy at a wedding. Therefore, participants will need to be socially distanced at all times for safety and will sit six feet apart from each other in designated spaces in the pews. The groomsmen will be in their seats at the time of the process. Bridesmaids will enter the church as part of the process appropriately distanced and go to their seats.

Photographers will be required to maintain social distancing at all time and wear a mask. Music will follow the protocols set forth by the diocese. This means no group singing or group of performers. Non singing melodies will be encouraged. At this time no mariachi group will be able to perform until the diocese clears ensembles and choirs for singing. However, one person singing and or a cantor may sing in the choir area of the church.

Reception of eucharist will be received in the pews. There will be no lines for eucharist. Following the service, we ask all guest to leave the church and go immediately to the reception location. Only the wedding party can remain for photos. Photos need to be completed in a timely fashion. As always, all decorations must be removed from the church.

### **Funerals**

Funerals are a deeply emotional moment in the life of a family and it is our goal to maintain the intimacy that safety will allows. Funerals will follow the same safety protocols as described above for weekend liturgies except for the following:

1. Eucharist will be served in the pews for those wishing to receive the sacrament.
2. Except for immediate family processing in with the casket, all participants will be in their pews at the beginning of the liturgy.

3. Masks will be required at all times.
4. The church will be limited to 30 people including the family.
5. Readers will remain in their seats until time for the readings.
6. After the casket is removed at the end of the liturgy, participants are required to leave the church immediately following the liturgy.

With both weddings and funerals, we encourage those who would like to live stream the liturgy. This is a good way to invite others into these special moments. If you wish to live stream, we need to be informed before the liturgies so arrangements and placements can be made for safety. Only one person can operate live streaming per liturgy.

### **Baptism**

As with phase 1, all baptism will be celebrated outside of mass. It is our hope that after the pandemic is over, we will be able to resume the celebration of baptism during our liturgies. Participants are limited to the immediate family and the godparents. Again, social distancing will be required of guests. Most baptisms will be celebrated on a Saturday morning beginning at 9 am and ending at 12 noon. For safety all participants will be required to wear a mask except for children under the age of 6. We will require one hour between baptisms for sanitation protocols prior to the next celebration.

### **Sanitation**

Sanitation is a big issue for us at MHT. Even at the outdoor masses all seats were sanitized prior to each liturgy and it is even more important with the re-introduction of indoor liturgies. Masses have been spaced un such a way to provide at least two hours between masses. During this time all seats, doors and other items are wiped down with disinfectant and the bathrooms are completely cleaned. During the summer we installed new air ventilators that will clear the air in the bathrooms.

A note on meetings, fund raising and food prep.

Until we are safely into phase 3 and the infection rate of Covid 19 in the country is substantially lower than it is today we will not be able to host special celebration and food related activities. While the kitchen is still in compliance with county health regulations the kitchen is still closed until further notice. Because of social distancing concerns we will not be able to loan the hall out for receptions and other celebrations. Our wonderful tradition of Sunday breakfast is also on hold until further notice.

However, there are a few important meetings that are still taking place. Committees such as parish finance council, board of directors and parish council will now be meeting in the hall which provides the space for social distancing. All participants will be required to wear masks while attending meetings. The hall will be sanitized following these meetings. All other meetings and education opportunities will be held via zoom.

### **We are in this Together**

I know these rules continue to be a burden but we must remember we are making great progress. If we continue to follow the three W's as outline by the Pima health department. Wear a mask, wash your hands and wait patiently for the other person to pass we will move forward toward our goal of getting to a new and exciting future.

Please remember, that by caring for each other we are living our faith of compassion and honoring each other in a very special way. I firmly believe that God will reward us for our care and patience. As always, we will keep you informed as we move forward.

May God bless you and your family abundantly as we take our first baby steps toward a new life with each other.

Yours in the Savior,

Fr. Tom

See next page for new office hours.

**New office Hours beginning October 1, 2020.**

**Monday through Wednesday 8 am – 12 noon. By appointment Only.**

**For food boxes please call ahead and a box will be prepared and left outside the front door.**