Mass and Ministry COVID-19 Guidelines
Archdiocese of Oklahoma City
April 28, 2021

Effective on the Vigil of Pentecost, **Saturday, May 22, 2021**, all remaining precautions related to COVID-19 are removed.

The changes are in bold. Archbishop Coakley asks all Catholics within the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City to remain charitable and respectful of fellow parishioners and visitors while maintaining a welcoming environment. The archdiocese will continue to monitor COVID-19 and make adjustments to the guidelines and precautions if needed. Thank you for your patience.

Guiding Principles

1. **Faith:** With parishioners returning to Mass, encourage catechesis and understanding of the Real Presence and foster an environment of discipleship and hospitality;
2. **Subsidiarity:** In applying these guidelines pastors and their staffs are encouraged to adapt them to their unique circumstances and local conditions;
3. **Charity:** Everyone is encouraged to be charitable and understanding with fellow parishioners.

Mass

1. The dispensation for attending Sunday Mass is lifted, **effective Saturday, April 24, 2021.** Those dispensed from the Sunday Mass obligation include:
   a: Those who are ill or in quarantine;
   b: Those who are caregivers for someone who is ill;
   c: The homebound;
   d: Anyone who is unable to receive a COVID vaccine at this time;
   e: Those who are vulnerable due to age, health or severe anxiety about becoming ill;
2. With the exception of “d,” these dispensations were in place prior to the pandemic. For questions about dispensations to the obligation, contact your pastor;
3. **The provisional mask requirement is lifted.** Face coverings are optional. Please be courteous and respectful to fellow parishioners who may or may not choose to wear a mask. Parishioners who are ill or have a family member in their household who has tested positive for COVID-19 or other illness are exempt from the Sunday Mass obligation and should stay home;
4. Mass capacity can be increased to 100 percent. Parishes may provide an area/section that is socially distanced for parishioners who may remain vulnerable; **if a socially distanced area is provided, masks are required in these areas;**
5. Parishes that live-stream should consider removing or deleting the video of the Mass from Facebook, YouTube, etc., immediately following Mass to encourage in-person participation at Mass;
6. Extra sanitizing of church building and furnishings is no longer required;
7. Hymnals can be returned to the pews;
8. **Choirs and congregational singing are allowed, masks optional;**
9. Holy water can be returned to fonts;
10. Nurseries and cry rooms are allowed;
11. Please consider providing printed bulletins;
12. Please encourage parishioners to stay home if they are ill or have symptoms of COVID-19 or other illness;
13. Offertory collections are allowed without restrictions; collection drop-off areas can remain;
14. It is recommended that hand sanitizer be provided for parishioners in pews or at stations near entry points and exits;
15. The chalice may be reinstated at parishes by pastors, but is not required. If the chalice is offered at a parish, it always is optional for Catholics to receive from the chalice;
16. The Sign of Peace may be reinstated. Please be mindful that some parishioners may not want to return to shaking hands.

Communion

1. Distribution of communion must be returned to the traditional placement during Mass;
2. Parishioners are encouraged to sanitize their hands before receiving communion;
3. Priests and extraordinary ministers of holy communion are no longer required to wear masks, but can continue to wear masks;
4. Priests and extraordinary ministers of holy communion are no longer required to sanitize their fingers after distributing communion on the tongue.

In-Person Faith Formation and Other Ministries

1. Masks are optional;
2. Parishes can provide an area/section that is socially distanced for participants who may remain vulnerable;
3. COVID-19 waivers are not required.

Receptions and Social Gatherings

1. Larger parish-wide social gatherings are permitted at full capacity; parishes can provide an area/section that is socially distanced. Use of outdoor spaces is encouraged;
2. Receptions are allowed;
3. Guests should be encouraged to eat and drink at tables;
   a. Food service/distribution – it is preferred to have staff/catering employee/volunteer serve as opposed to self-serve buffet style or in common buckets/bowls/platters;
   b. Face coverings optional;
   c. Parishes may provide an area/section that is socially distanced for participants at parish-sponsored (as opposed to private) receptions for those who may remain vulnerable; if a socially distanced area is provided, masks are required in these areas.

Schools

1. All current provisions and precautions remain in place for all Catholic schools through the end of the school year.

This document supersedes and replaces earlier documents and guidelines.