



DIocese OF BAKER

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Diocese of Baker Re-opening of Masses to the Public

Target Date: May 11, 2020

General Principles

1. A general dispensation from the Sunday Mass obligation will remain in place.
2. Vulnerable, at-risk and concerned persons are encouraged to remain home.
3. Anyone with the slightest symptoms or feelings of sickness must remain home.
4. Use of face masks/coverings by the faithful at public Masses is encouraged.
5. Members of a single household may sit together without observing social distancing with one another.

Process for Public Mass Attendance

6. The re-opening process will call for charity and understanding from the faithful. Parishes differ in space, in number of parishioners, in the availability of clergy. What one parish may be able to offer at this time of restriction, another may not.
7. A parish that is unable to maintain strict social distancing cannot open Masses to the public until it is able to do so.
8. Priests are encouraged to offer two Masses during weekdays (morning and evening) and as needed, additional Masses on the weekends to allow as many people as possible to attend Mass and receive Communion in given period.
9. Pastors might solicit the names of all the faithful in their community who would like to attend Holy Mass. To accommodate fairly a large number of people, it might be necessary to ration family or individual attendance to one Mass in a given period.
10. To assure a place in church, people could sign up online, by email, in writing, or by phone call, but first-come, first-served systems and online-only sign-ups should be avoided to assure greater fairness.
11. People could indicate if there are specific Mass times they cannot attend.
12. Since the Sunday Mass dispensation remains in effect, there is no *obligation* to attend Mass on Sundays. In this unusual period, therefore, it's useful to think in terms of "Mass Every Day" instead of "Mass on Sunday"—that is, "Go to Mass when you can find a space, whatever day that may be."
13. The maximum number allowed in church includes the priest, liturgical ministers, livestream videographers, and anyone else present during Mass.

Keeping Public Masses Short (to make it easier for priests to offer additional Masses and to minimize the time the faithful will be gathered in the same space).

14. Priests should enter from the sacristy.
15. When possible, the shorter version of the readings should be utilized.
16. The homily should be no longer than three minutes.
17. The Apostle's Creed, not the Nicene Creed, should be said on Sundays.
18. There should be no more than three general intercessions.
19. No offertory collection is to be taken up.
20. It would be good to use Eucharistic Prayer II.
21. The sacred vessels should be purified after Mass (cf. #43 below).

Mandatory Practices

22. All missalettes, pew cards, pencils and loose items in the pews must be removed.
23. Collection baskets are to be placed in a fixed location near the entrance of the church, where they can be monitored.
24. Bulletins are not to be distributed.

Additional, temporary liturgical restrictions

25. No congregational singing
26. No choirs. Cantors only
27. No presentation of the gifts by the faithful.
28. The ciborium with hosts for the faithful should be placed at the far edge of the corporal to avoid the possibility of contamination by the priest's breath during the words of Consecration.
29. No ministers (except priest and deacon) in entrance procession and recessional.
30. Parishioners must sit where the ushers direct them, to assure that they fill only marked seats that maintain social distancing and avoid having people cross in front of them to take a seat.

Communion

31. Social distancing must be maintained during the Communion procession.
32. Single file Communion lines only.
33. Holy Communion in the hand is strongly encouraged.
- ~~34.~~ Priests and Extraordinary Ministers *may not wear* masks or face coverings when distributing Holy Communion.
35. Priests and Extraordinary Ministers *may not use gloves* to give Communion.
36. All ministers of Holy Communion must sanitize their hands immediately after receiving Holy Communion themselves and prior to distributing Holy Communion to the faithful.
37. If a priest has underlying health conditions, is over 60 years old, or is otherwise concerned, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may take his place.

38. Members of the same household need not observe social distancing with one another during the Communion procession.
39. It is acceptable to livestream Mass to satellite spaces/facilities near the church and to distribute Holy Communion there in accord with social distancing standards.

Entrances and Exits

40. Once the maximum number of attendees is reached, others must be turned away.
41. Multiple exits should be used at the end of Mass to expedite departure.
42. Exit doors should be propped open after Mass.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

43. After they have been purified, Communion vessels should be washed with soap and water following each Mass *without submerging them in water*. (Submersion may cause permanent damage to the vessels.)
44. Restroom use and cleaning policy must be formalized (e.g. one-at-a-time use only; facilities cleaned and sanitized immediately following each Mass).
45. People should make a point of using their own restrooms at home before coming to Mass. Church restroom use should be limited to emergencies
46. A parent, not a brother or sister, must accompany a child who uses the restroom.

Practical Considerations

47. Congregational seating to be used should be clearly marked by taping across the ends of pews closed for seating, and marking available seats with a taped X.
48. Place tape on the floor to indicate proper spacing between persons (1) in the main aisle for the Communion procession and (2) by the restroom doors.
49. Ensure that liturgical ministers observe social distancing to the extent possible in the performance of their duties.
50. Dismiss the congregation by rows at the end of Mass, beginning at the rear, to avoid crowding exits.
51. Signs could be placed on church doors with the Mass schedule and a telephone number and email for people who wish to sign up on a list to attend Mass.
52. Social distancing policy should be posted on the church doors.
53. Pastors are encouraged to prepare a written or videotaped "welcome back" message with practical information about the re-opening transition.



Most Reverend Liam Cary
Bishop of Baker
30 April 2020