



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.