



## **Guidelines for Mass and other Liturgical Celebrations**

### **General Directives**

1. The dispensation from the obligation to participate in Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation will remain in place at this time.
2. Those who have symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must not attend Mass.
3. Outdoor liturgical celebrations may continue.
4. Livestreamed liturgies should continue to be provided for those who are unable to attend (this could become a normal component of a parish's ministry to its ill and homebound parishioners).
5. Physical distancing of six (6) feet between those of different households is to be maintained.
6. Those present must, unless exempted, wear a mask which covers the nose and mouth. Children under 2 and those with breathing problems, or those not able to remove the mask themselves, should not wear one. Parishes should consider supplying masks for those who do not have one. At outdoor services, masks are only required for those moments when people might come within 6 feet of others who are not in their household (going to their place, processions, etc.), or for those participating in congregational singing (see 15, below). *California Face Covering Guidance:* <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/guidance-for-face-coverings.aspx>.
7. Attendance capacity for indoor Masses should generally be in accord with the recommended capacity limits for a county's assigned tier. Since the capacity limits are only recommendations, however, there is flexibility in cases where a greater capacity may be deemed useful, whether for special liturgies or other needs, if other precautions, including distancing, are carefully maintained. Practically speaking, with physical distancing in place, most churches will only be able to sit somewhere between 25-50% capacity for any given liturgy.

8. Reservation systems and signing in are not required. These may continue to be used if they are helpful or necessary in a particular parish's situation.
9. Those attending services should self-screen for symptoms and be asked to use hand sanitizer upon arrival. Hand sanitizer is to be available near all entrances.
10. The CDC has determined that available evidence shows transmission of COVID-19 by touching contaminated surfaces is rare. Therefore, routine disinfection of surfaces is no longer necessary. High-touch surfaces should be cleaned at least once a day, or as often as determined is necessary, with soap and water. Disinfection is only necessary if someone who was sick with or tested positive for COVID-19 was present in the last 24 hours.

A parish might choose to clean more frequently or disinfect if:

- i. High transmission of COVID-19 in their community
- ii. Infrequent hand hygiene is practiced
- iii. Space is occupied by populations at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19
- iv. Space is occupied by young children and others who may not consistently wear masks, wash hands, or cover coughs and sneezes

Full CDC Guidance on Cleaning: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html#anchor\\_1617548426741](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html#anchor_1617548426741)

11. If a parish decides to reduce disinfecting in accord with the new CDC guidelines, renewed emphasis needs to be placed on personal responsibility for hand hygiene.
12. For indoor services, ventilation should be increased in accord with CDC and state guidelines:  
  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/ventilation.html>  
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Interim-Guidance-for-Ventilation-Filtration-and-Air-Quality-in-Indoor-Environments.aspx>
13. Cry rooms/confessionals/reconciliation rooms and similar small rooms without adequate ventilation are not to be used.
14. Bulletins, programs, and other single-use items may be handed out. Shared items such as hymnals are not to be used.
15. Due to the increased risk of spreading COVID through respiratory droplets and aerosols well beyond 6ft when singing or playing wind instruments, the following are to be observed:
  - At indoor services, choir members/cantors must wear a mask, and sustained congregational singing is not permitted. Plastic face shields are insufficient for

- singers as they do not reduce aerosols. Those playing a wind instrument must take precautions to reduce aerosol emission. Examples can be using a bell cover/flute sock, wearing a mask with a slit cut in it, or playing in an area with increased ventilation.
- At outdoor services, choir members/cantors may choose to not wear a mask, but if so, must be at least 12 feet from others. Congregational singing is permitted, but those singing are to wear masks if within 12 feet of others.
- Fully vaccinated cantors/choir members do not count toward capacity limits. Singers who cannot feasibly sing with a face covering are not required to wear one indoors *while singing* if they are fully vaccinated, or routinely tested at least twice weekly for COVID-19, and if while singing they stay at least six feet away from all other persons, including other choir members and instrumentalists.
- Further recommendations can be found in the state guidance for Live Performances: <https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-live-performances-indoor--en.pdf>

16. Holy water should be made available to the faithful in whatever way seems most prudent. Many have gone without this well-loved sacramental for a long time. Means of providing it could include having hand sanitizer near holy water fonts, making use of automatic holy water dispensers, or people can bring water from home and have it blessed at the end of Mass or as part of the Sprinkling Rite, etc.

17. Lay ministry to the homebound may be restarted where this has not already been done, following common-sense precautions of hand hygiene, masking, and distancing.

18. With precautions in place, every parish should be providing normal opportunities for the full sacramental and devotional life of the faithful.

### **Directives for Mass**

19. Altar servers and other ministers may serve at the discretion of the pastor. Ministers must follow distancing guidelines for seating.

20. Ministers may process and exit as normal. The procession with the gifts may likewise take place. Those bringing up the gifts sanitize their hands beforehand, and the vessels containing the bread and wine are covered.

21. The collection may take place at the customary time during the Mass, but baskets/plates should not be passed between individuals.

22. The exchange of the sign of peace is omitted.
23. Communion from the chalice remains suspended.
24. Ministers are to use a face covering and sanitize hands for the distribution of Communion. A small table should be available near communion ministers, with room for a corporal and hand sanitizer, should they need to sanitize their hands during the distribution of Communion.