

St. Bernard Procedures regarding COVID Restrictions Revised as of May 28, 2021

We have all been praying for an end to COVID and the return to a more normal life and it appears our prayers are being heard! As we announced over the last two weekends, with the relaxing of NJ Restrictions on gatherings, we are now permitted to be at 100% of capacity.

Our Re-Engage committee and I fully recognize that everyone is at a different place in their comfort level so we will proceed cautiously.

LITURGICAL GATHERINGS (Masses, Weddings, Funerals, etc.)

Beginning the weekend of May 29-30, 2021, on the Blessed Mother side of the church, the ribbons blocking off every other pew will be removed, the pews will be fully available for seating and face coverings will be optional.

On the St. Joseph side of the church, we will still maintain the ribbons blocking off every other pew enforcing a stronger distancing and face coverings will be required. It will be up to you to determine where you are most comfortable. We will also return our customs of bringing up of the gifts at the offertory and resuming the offertory collection.

For the time being we will also continue to maintain an overflow livestream mass with communion in our cafeteria for those who still want an even greater amount of distancing.

Please know that we will continue to sanitize the church regularly and sanitize our hands prior to distributing communion.

We will continue to evaluate this setup and adjust accordingly in the coming weeks. Please remember we all want everyone safe and I continue to ask for your patience and understanding as we navigate through these uncharted waters! Rather than get frustrated or angry ... please say a prayer as we are all in this together!

At this time, we are not prepared to resume the filling of Holy Water Fonts or re-introducing the Sign of Peace prior to communion. Further, Communion under the Precious Blood is still suspended.

All of these new procedures are subject to change as restrictions in New Jersey change and will be posted on our social media accounts along with more details on all of our gatherings and meetings.

PARISH MEETINGS

Beginning on Friday, May 28th, masks are no longer necessary to wear (pursuant to CDC guidelines) for indoor meetings nor are they required to maintain social distancing. Beginning on Friday, June 4th, all indoor limits for meetings are lifted.

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OUTDOOR EVENTS

All limits on outdoor gatherings were lifted on May 19th and beginning on Friday, May 28th, all social distancing requirements are likewise lifted. Masks are not required (pursuant to CDC guidelines).

FOOD SERVICES (at our gatherings)

Restrictions on food service and beverage stations have been lifted. It is still ***recommended***, however, that food be served either plated or a buffet where food is served as people approach. The practical concern is that multiple people should not be touching the same serving utensils.