

## ***Assumption Parish COVID-19 Protocols***

Only by ongoing efforts will we avoid another outbreak of the pandemic. By following these protocols we will help make it possible to continue safely having Mass with a congregation. (Please see the bishop's letter and decree of April 30<sup>th</sup> regarding COVID-19 at [www.austindiocese.org](http://www.austindiocese.org).)

### **Mass Attendance**

**The dispensation for attending Sunday Mass remains in effect. There is no moral obligation to attend because God knows there is a proper reason for staying home.**

**There is a moral obligation to stay home if you are ill or have been told to self-quarantine.**

The parish will take proper precautions but cannot guarantee there is no coronavirus on the property. If this troubles you, you may make use of the dispensation from the bishop.

Those who are at risk should stay home. "At risk" includes those over 65 (especially those over 80) and anyone with underlying health issues.

Those who are at risk or who wish to avoid larger gatherings are welcome to attend Mass during the week when the congregation is much smaller and greater social distancing is possible.

### **Limited Seating in Church**

**Seating will be limited to about 100-150 people for Masses, funerals, and weddings.** We will only be using 25% of the pews at each Mass (i.e., every fourth pew) in order to be able to ensure they have been properly disinfected. The rest of the pews will be roped off and then used for subsequent Masses.

**The Cry Room will be locked.** Very little seating would be available and it cannot be properly disinfected before each Mass.

### **Requirements for Entering the Church**

If you are sick, you may **not** enter at any time. If you are at risk, we encourage you to stay home or to visit the church on weekdays when there are no crowds.

Sanitize your hands before arriving.

Wear a mask. The mask is to protect others from you more than you from them. Even if no one else is in the church, your breath can leave the coronavirus on surfaces for hours or days.

Maintain 6-foot distance ("social distance") from anyone not in your household.

When entering and leaving, be attentive to maintain social distancing. Do not stop to speak to others since this can cause congestion and violate social distancing.

**If you are a group of four or more, please use the smaller side pews if you can fit.** (This will allow more people to be seated in the church than if you sat in a large pew.)

**When possible, sit in the middle of a large pew or at the far end of a side pew.** This will allow others easily to sit in the pew without climbing over you or asking you to slide over.

Keep your hands off your pew and the pew in front of you (for example, don't grab the rail).

Leave nothing in the pew and do not place anything in the pew rack.

### **Receiving Holy Communion**

**You must wear a mask and maintain social distancing in the line.** You will be passing less than six feet from those seated in the pews and must protect them from your breath.

**Holy Communion at Mass will only be distributed on the hand.** Communion on the tongue exposes the priest's hands to your breath, which would then possibly contaminate the Hosts he would touch afterwards. Anyone not wishing to receive on the hand can make a spiritual act of communion or can talk to the priest.

When the person in front of you is receiving Holy Communion, remove or lower your mask. **Do not say "Amen," but rather nod your head in affirmation** (this avoids your breath contaminating the airspace).