

COVID-19 Protocols as released 2/11/2021

The diocesan COVID-19 Task Force met Feb. 10 to review current protocols. After studying current local COVID-19 data, the task force made adjustments to the protocols. Pastors have the option to operate under the current protocols, depending upon local circumstances.

Liturgy updates:

- Choirs of eight members or fewer may lead the music at Mass beginning Palm Sunday Weekend (March 28 and 29). Social distancing and masks will be required. There will be no choir rehearsals any earlier than March 13 and 14.
- Pastors and associates may greet parishioners before and after Mass beginning the weekend of Feb. 20 and 21. Priests must be masked and observe social distancing.
- The normal use of altar servers may commence Palm Sunday weekend. Servers must be masked and observe social distancing.
- Simple liturgical processions may commence on Palm Sunday weekend. Processions may not be large or congregational.
- Standard liturgies at long-term care facilities may resume if priests, deacons, laity and residents are immunized and facility protocols are followed.

Unchanged liturgy protocols:

- The dispensation by Bishop Nickless from the Sunday obligation remains in effect until further notice.
- No congregational singing.
- Masks in church are mandatory.
- Social distancing in churches will remain in practice.
- No holy water in hand fonts.
- Current sanitization procedures will continue.

Non-liturgical updates:

- Parish facilities may be used and rented at the discretion of pastors effective March 1. Facility users must follow all public health measures. Anyone in parish facilities must remain masked if not eating and drinking.
- Check with the Catholic Central Offices if planning a small group retreat or traveling with a parish group.
- Steubenville, Emmaus and Quest were approved with strict guidelines under the supervision of the Office of Evangelization, Discipleship and Family Life.