



Archdiocese of Mobile

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Letter from Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi

To: All Priests

Dear Brothers,

Thank you for your continued dedicated ministry. You are a blessing to our people and to me. Please know you are each in my prayers. Please remember me in prayer as well.

We all look forward to the resumption of public Masses in our archdiocese next Tuesday, May 12. At the same time, we must remain aware that the coronavirus is a very real and present danger. Our people continue to get sick and to die from this scourge. We cannot be complacent in our efforts to foster the safety of neighbor.

In accord with directives from Governor Ivey and after previous consultation with the Presbyteral Council, below are the requirements for any Catholic parish which wishes to have Mass and for any priest who celebrates Mass with others present. These requirements must be followed strictly for the good of all.

The following actions will be required for any Mass in the Archdiocese of Mobile. Any church unable to strictly fulfill these requirements may not have public Masses.

- 1) No one, clergy or laity, is to attend Mass if they feel sick.
- 2) A general dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass remains in effect.
- 3) Social spacing in churches is required. Only every other pew may be used; the other pew will need to be cordoned off by ribbon or cord.
- 4) The use of pews must respect social distancing. Care must be exercised that only the proper number of people attend Mass so that social distancing may be maintained. This means that no one is to sit within 6 feet of one another unless living in the same household.
- 5) Hymnals and other shared worship aids may not be used. Only one use worship aids may be used.
- 6) A choir or musicians may be present but only if the same social distancing is maintained.
- 7) Liturgical ministers must also observe social distancing.
- 8) Offertory baskets may not be passed person to person.
- 9) The Sign of Peace may be retained but no physical contact is required.
- 10) Communicants are to keep social distancing when in the Communion line.

- 11) Communion is not to be distributed from the chalice.
- 12) Only the priest(s) may distribute Communion.
- 13) Priests are to sanitize their hands before distributing Communion.
- 14) Only priest concelebrants may use intinction. Deacons may only receive the consecrated host.
- 15) Communicants are to maintain social distancing when receiving Communion from the priest.
- 16) No kneelers, Communion rails, or other shared surfaces may be used at the distribution of Communion.
- 17) Although people may wear masks and gloves to Mass, Communion may not be distributed or received with gloves.
- 18) The priest is to take care that he does not touch the communicant. If he does, he is to re-sanitize his hands before continuing distribution of Communion.
- 19) People should be asked to maintain social distancing when departing the church at the end of Mass.
- 20) Pews/common surfaces are to be disinfected between Masses.

Again, thank you for your ministry. I pray that God will bless and protect you.

Sincerely in the Lord,

Most Reverend Thomas J. Rodi
Archbishop of Mobile