

SAINT ALBERT THE GREAT

Guidelines for Funeral/Memorial Masses during COVID-19 Pandemic

With our deepest Sympathy

The pandemic of 2020 has disrupted and threatened almost every aspect of our social lives but it has been a particular pain and disruption to your bereavement of your loved one. We sympathize with that difficulty and, as your church, we offer our prayers and support to you and your family. Also know, that we take very seriously our obligation and responsibility is to keep everyone as safe as possible while on our church property.

To that end, we have developed this guidelines for the celebration of funeral and memorial masses in light of the covid-19 pandemic in cooperation with the CDC, Governor DeWine, the Bishops of the State of Ohio and our diocesan guidelines. Please refer to our parish website (www.saint-Albert.org) for the most up-to-date guidelines. Anyone unable to cooperate or uncomfortable with these guidelines is asked to refrain from attending services in our church at this time.

We thank you in advance for doing your best to cooperate with all of these guidelines because they are the best we can propose considering our obligation and responsibility to the common good, to the wider community, to our government and health officials, and our church authorities.

All Worshippers in our Church

Anyone desiring to enter the church for services will be asked to observe public health and sanitary precautions known widely as “social distance”. Therefore,

- The number of people permitted in church is limited to those who can fit into the designated “box seats” marked on the pews with yellow tape (approx. 250 people)
- **face coverings** are to be worn inside buildings by everyone older than two years of age (it is preferred that you bring your own)
- **sanitization of hands** upon entering the building - sanitizer is available at the entrances (you should carry personal sanitizer with you)
- **social distance** while seated (sitting only within the yellow marked box seats) and during standing/ waiting in line (floors are marked in red)
- reception of holy communion **in the hand only**
- **no use of kneelers**, no physical contact with non-family members, no socializing in the church, etc
- All worshipers are required to leave the church immediately following the service and refrain from congregating or socializing in church

Virtual broadcast of Funeral

Our church is equipped with a very modest cell phone stand located in the first pew of the church if you would like to broadcast your funeral service on Facebook Live or some other streaming service that you may have available.

Funeral Mass with a Casket or an Urn

- All worshipers at funerals are asked to use the Wallings Road entrance/circle drive doors of the church which will be propped open by our church ushers 15 minutes prior to the scheduled mass time.

- All those worshipers not in the immediate family are asked to follow the instructions of the ushers and to be seated according to our social distance seating chart (sitting only in the yellow envelope taped boxes on the pews)
- The members of the immediate family will accompany the casket/urn to the baptismal font where they will be greeted by the priest.
- Following the sprinkling with holy water, the immediate family will be seated in their household groups in the every other pew off the center aisle of the church.
- There will be no gifts of bread and wine presented and no sign of peace during the Mass.
- The readers of the Scriptures and the intercessions will need to carry a paper copy of the reading, read from a stand-alone microphone on the floor in front the pulpit/ambo, removing one's facemask only for speaking.

Memorial Mass without Casket or Urn

- All worshipers attending a memorial mass are asked to enter the church through the south/chandelier entrance of the church.
- Worshipers are invited to enter the church 15 minutes before the scheduled time of the mass when the doors of the church are propped open by our church ushers.
- Members of the immediate family may be seated in households in the front pews on either side of the center aisle of the church leaving a few empty between them.
- All other worshipers are invited to be seated in the opened sections of the church according to the seating chart (yellow-taped socially distant box markings on each pew)

Following the Mass

- The family and congregation are not able to congregate inside the church but must move immediately out of the church and to their vehicles.
- Sadly, due to the restrictions of social distancing and the care of our volunteer ministers we are unable to offer bereavement luncheons as we have always done.