

Our Lady of Grace – Morristown Plan for Public Worship and Reopening – Phase I.

At this point in time we are limited to 10 persons at Mass (due to social distancing requirements) but as the State allows for higher numbers, this plan will also be used. Health authorities recommend frequent hand hygiene, vigilant social distancing, and the use of face coverings in public.

Anyone feeling sick should remain at home, and anyone who has been in close contact with a COVID positive individual should self-quarantine for fourteen days.

Social distancing calls for avoiding close contact with persons outside of one's household. This generally means avoid being within six feet of others, especially if this proximity will last fifteen minutes or more. Certain necessary tasks (purchasing food, medications, working in an essential business) may require that we come closer than six feet from others. These momentary interactions present an acceptable risk, especially when other precautions are taken. Reception of the Sacraments is important for the faithful in the midst of a pandemic, so similar guidelines should apply. Given how the virus is thought to spread, this risk is lower for brief encounters than in cases of prolonged contact.

General Provisions

1. A general dispensation from Sunday obligation remains in effect.
 - All persons who are at risk should remain home for their own safety.
 - While there is no obligation to attend Sunday Mass, we encourage all people to grow in their relationship with the Lord, keep holy the Lord's Day, and maintain contact with their parish by prayer and watching the Mass over the internet or on television. Opportunities to virtually participate in Mass are available at the following sites or links: {insert links }
 - When it may be safely done, opportunities for those unable to attend Mass in person to receive the Eucharist will be provided. Please call the rectory and we will let you know if and when these opportunities may be available.
2. The symptoms of infection for COVID-19 include a fever of 100.4 or higher, cough, headache, sore throat, shortness of breath, fatigue, loss of taste or smell, and unexplained body aches. Anyone with these symptoms should remain home and not come to church for any reason.

Screening and Hygiene

1. Hand sanitizer has been placed at the entrances of the church. Everyone should perform hand hygiene when entering and exiting the Church. Restrooms have hot water and soap for hand washing.

2. The faithful, 2 years of age and over, must wear coverings over their face in public, including when they come to Church. According to NYS regulations, attendees are not required to wear masks when seated as long as they are 6 feet away from others or from the same household.

3. We will clean and disinfect the Church in accord with the recommendations of the New York State Department of Health and CDC guidelines.

Limited Mass Attendance:

At this time Mass attendance is limited to 10 persons, but as NYS allows, we will increase those able to attend.

When attending Mass, participants must respect signage and markers placed to assure safe social distancing.

[How to assure limits: first come, first in; more frequent Masses, designating certain Masses for certain groups (alphabetical last names, online reservations) Each parish must determine how they will see that the number of attendees exceeds the limit]

Social Distancing

- There will be signage and markings to help social distancing.
- The faithful should maintain at least a six-foot distance from others outside their household (pews will be taped off)
- Members of a single household do not need to practice social distancing.
- Areas where the faithful may stand in line will have tape on the floor to indicate proper distancing.
- Pastor and or Ushers will “direct traffic” to avoid congregating when the faithful arrive, move in, or leave the church.
- Dismissal after Mass will be row by row and will be directed by the ushers.
- Once the available spaces are filled, ushers will not admit additional people to the church.
- Bathrooms are single occupancy but disinfecting spray, hand soap and signage will be placed in each.
- There will be no choirs at this time.

Specific Provisions for Parts of Mass:

Instructions/Protocol for Celebrants and servers

- A priest with symptoms of COVID-19 infection (fever of 100.4, cough, headache, sore throat, shortness of breath, fatigue, loss of taste or smell, or unexplained body aches) or with a respiratory infection of any kind should refrain from celebrating public Mass. This

rule applies to deacons, servers, lectors, sacristans, ushers, Eucharist ministers and others who serve at a Mass.

- Priest celebrant and other ministers will not wear gloves and will wear masks at Communion Distribution time. When not wearing masks priest and other ministers will remain more than six feet away from the congregation.
- To the extent possible, deacons, servers, lectors, Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion should remain at least six feet from the priest and each other, except as provided below.
- Proper distances in the sacristy and during entrance and recessional processions must be maintained. Only those necessary should take part in a procession. The others can go to their place or leave separately.
- Offertory procession will be omitted.
- A deacon or server may bring the missal, chalice, paten/ciborium, and cruets to the altar, while the celebrant waits at the chair. (or the priest could do it himself) After the altar is set up, the deacon or server moves away, and the priest goes to the altar.
- A basket for the collection will be placed near the doors of the church so offertory contributions can be placed as participants enter or exit the church. Baskets should not be passed from person to person.
- The celebrant's host should be placed alone on his paten. If hosts for others are to be consecrated, they will be placed separately toward the side of the altar (on a separate corporal) so the hosts are not in front of the priest as he speaks the Eucharistic prayer.
- The deacon may stand near the priest to elevate the chalice at "Through Him and with Him and In Him," since this section is brief.
- There will be no sign of peace.

Distribution of Holy Communion (this is one of the three options in the USCCB document)

- At the start of Mass, or at another suitable time during Mass, the priest will explain that those desiring to receive Holy Communion will do so at the normal time. He will instruct them to come forward for Communion, respecting social distancing.

Tape has been placed on the floor at the places where the faithful will line up for Communion. The route the faithful will follow will be explained.

- The cup will not be offered.
- The faithful will remove face coverings just prior to approaching for Communion.
- The priest will perform hand hygiene after receiving Communion and prior to distributing communion. He will wear a mask.
- The faithful will be encouraged to receive in the hand but may receive on the tongue (remove mask when second in line or at some other appropriate time). Those receiving on the tongue should wait until the line of those receiving in the hand nears the end, and then come forward to receive Communion.
- At the conclusion of the distribution of Holy Communion, the remaining hosts are placed in the tabernacle and then the priest performs hand hygiene with sanitizer.
- Mass concludes as normal.

CDC guidelines on “Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility” if someone is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 infection are as follows:

- Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
- Responsible Parties do not necessarily need to close operations if they can close off the affected areas.
- Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
- Wait 24 hours before you clean or disinfect. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, and shared equipment.
- Once the area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.
- Anyone without close contact with the person who is sick can return to the area immediately after disinfection.