



St. Theresa Parish
Celebrating Mass under COVID-19 Phase 1
Re-opening the Church under Safety Measures

On May 18, 2020 Governor Baker announced the 1st phase of the emergence of the Comm of Mass from restrictions imposed in order to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. As a part of phase 1, he has allowed houses of worship to gather but with mandated restrictions. Bishop McManus then released in a decree that he has lifted his suspension of public celebrations of the Sacred Liturgy, while at the same time reminding Priests “to carefully observe the restrictions which continue to be imposed by government authorities in the interest of public health”. He directed that “liturgical adaptations be implemented throughout the Diocese.”

- Older adults and those with underlying health conditions should avoid public assemblies
 - *The suspension of the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays will remain in force until Dec. 31, 2020*
- Do not come to Church if you are sick or have been exposed to someone who is sick
- Masks are to be worn upon leaving your car and must remain on until returning to your car
 - Exceptions: When receiving Holy Communion, children under the age of 2 and those unable to wear a mask due to a medical condition
 - The only time the Priest will wear a mask is when distributing Holy Communion
- Depending on which door you enter, you will sit in a pew on that side of the church
 - Upon entering and exiting the church, Ushers will assist you to your pew
 - The doors to the church will be open when arriving
 - The doors to the church will be closed 5 minutes after Mass has begun, or sooner if Mass is at full capacity
 - The doors to the church will be reopened at the conclusion of Mass
- The maximum number of people allowed to attend each Mass is 40% capacity in the church – that number will be altered to meet the 6-foot distancing requirement
 - All members in attendance must always keep a distance of 6 feet inside the Church
 - Exceptions: Family members will be allowed to sit together
 - Once the maximum number has been reached for a Mass, no additional person will be allowed to attend that particular Mass
- The Church has used markings as distancing indicator when entering the Church, sitting in the Pews, and receiving Holy Communion
 - Communicants will leave their pews one row at a time to receive Holy Communion
 - An Usher will assist in directing you

- All Hymnals and Missalettes have been temporarily removed from the church
 - "One time" worship aids will be in the pews for each Mass
 - Parishioners are asked to take them at the end of Mass
- A Communion table will be set up and the Holy Communion offered by the Priest directly, or by a disposable cup
 - At distribution of Holy Communion, communicants will be directed to leave their pews one row at a time while observing the requisite social distancing
 - Each person will receive a squirt of hand sanitizer before receiving Communion
 - If receiving by disposable cup, the cup is to be disposed of in the designated bowl at the altar
 - The Precious Blood is suspended to all but the Priest, concelebrants, and Deacons
- No congregational singing is allowed during Mass, with the exception of the Gospel Acclamation, Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Great Amen and Agnus Dei.
 - All the other parts of the Mass are recited
- The collection basket will not be passed during Mass
 - Parishioners are asked to place their donations in stationary baskets when entering the church or coming up to receive Holy Communion
- The invitation to exchange of the Sign of Peace and the shaking of hands at the end of Mass are suspended
- The rest rooms will be open during and after Mass, please use only when necessary
- There will be no social gathering after Masses in the Church
- The Priest is not permitted to greet parishioners on their way in or when exiting the Church
 - As always, if you would like to speak/meet with the Priest you may set that up with him directly or contact the parish office

If a place of worship learns that an individual with COVID-19 attended a service or otherwise entered the place of worship, it shall conduct a deep cleaning and disinfecting consistent with the Centers for Disease Control guidance

If a place of worship learns that an attendee or worker or other worker has tested positive for COVID-19, it shall notify the local Board of Health in the town and assist the local Board of Health as reasonably requested to trace likely contacts and advise contacts to isolate and self-quarantine

A Prayer in Time of Pandemic

O God, Whose Only Begotten Son
 bore the weight of human suffering for our salvation,
 hear the prayers of your Church
 for our sick brothers and sisters
 and deliver us from this time of trial.

Open our ears and our hearts to the voice of your Son:
Be not afraid, for I am with you always.

Bless all doctors and nurses, researchers and public servants;
give us the wisdom to do what is right and the faith to endure this hour,
that we might gather once again to praise your name in the heart of your Church,
delivered from all distress and confident in your mercy.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen