

## DURING THE COVID-19 SUSPENSION OF PUBLIC LITURGIES

### **Guidelines for Funeral Masses**

#### **In General**

- Bishop McManus has given permission for Funeral Masses and Committals to be celebrated during the suspension of public liturgies, provided that the number of those present be limited to the immediate family (limited to fifteen people) in addition to the Priest, liturgical and music ministers and Funeral Home personnel (total not to exceed 25 people).
- Families may also be provided with the opportunity to celebrate only the Rites of Committal at the cemetery with a Funeral Mass to be scheduled sometime in the future.
- Families should be assured that a Mass will, in any case, be offered for the deceased person on the day of their burial.
- Funeral directors should be advised that obituaries should not list the time or place of scheduled Funeral Masses.

#### **In regard to the Church**

- In order to promote social distancing (at least three feet apart) seat people in every-other pew and at a sufficient spacing in each pew.
- All water fountains should be turned off.
- All standing Holy Water should be removed from the Holy Water fonts.
- All pew backs in front of the seats to be occupied by the family should be cleaned before and after the Funeral with a spray disinfectant sufficient to kill cold and flu viruses.
- All door handles and other commonly used surfaces, including in bathrooms should be cleaned before and after the Funeral with a spray disinfectant sufficient to kill cold and flu viruses.

- The doors of the Church should be locked during the Funeral to prevent the number in the Church to exceed the legal limit of twenty-five people.

## In regard to the Liturgy

- The exchange of the Sign of Peace is omitted.
- An announcement is made before the distribution of Holy Communion that there is a “public health preference” for Communion in the hand, rather than on the tongue. Priests should be aware that they do not have a right to refuse Holy Communion on the tongue.
- The Communion Minister should use Hand sanitizer before and after distributing Holy Communion. If he accidentally touches the tongue or hand of the communicant, he must place the Blessed Sacrament on the Altar, make use of a hand sanitizer and then return to distributing Holy Communion.

Questions should be directed to the Office for Worship at [ofworship@worcesterdiocese.org](mailto:ofworship@worcesterdiocese.org).  
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