



# Orantes

The Newsletter of the Office for Divine Worship  
of the Diocese of Worcester

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## Beginning again...

Two weeks after Bishop McManus mandated the restoration of public celebrations of the Liturgy in the Diocese of Worcester, this special edition of *Orantes* explores some of the ways in which the Sacraments of Initiation may be celebrated with candidates for Confirmation and First Communion and the Elect and how those baptized in other ecclesial communities might now be received into the Church. We also explore various questions which have arisen in this early stage of celebrating the Sacred Mysteries in these first days of the Phase I restoration of the public liturgical life of the Diocese of Worcester.

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## Sacrament of Confirmation

In a letter dated May 25, 2020, Bishop McManus delegated all pastors and administrators “to confirm all members of the parish you would have presented to me for Confirmation this spring . . . between June 1 and June 30” . . . at public Mass.” These celebrations may be scheduled on any day of the week, in the morning, afternoon and evening. Scheduling is a local parish decision.



Pastors and pastoral leaders are invited to click the following links in order to download copies of the *Order of Confirmation* in [English](#), [Spanish](#) or [Portuguese](#) or go to the [worcesterdiocese.org](http://worcesterdiocese.org) Pandemic Resource Page.

The Mass “For the Conferral of Confirmation,” with the color red, white, or a festive color, may be used on any day in June except on the solemnities of the Most Holy Trinity (June 7), The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christ, June 14), The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (June 19), the Nativity of John the Baptist (June 24) and the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, Apostles (June 29). The Gloria is said and the Creed is omitted. One of the Prefaces of the Holy Spirit may be used, along with the proper forms of the Eucharistic Prayer included with this Mass setting. Except on the dates noted above, the readings may be taken from the Ritual Mass for Confirmation as found in the Lectionary, Volume IV.

Since these Masses must be celebrated with the same restrictions as for any Mass, including the appropriate provisions for social distancing and liturgical adaptations, parishes may need to schedule multiple celebrations.<sup>1</sup>

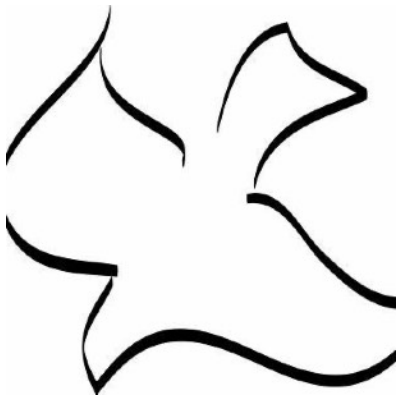
Family members who live in the same household may be seated in the same pew with the candidate seated at the outer edge closest to the main aisle. If the sponsor or proxy

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<sup>1</sup> See *Orantes* May 18

[\(click to download proxy form\)](#) does not live in this same household, he or she might be seated in the next available pew behind the family. All participants must wear masks throughout the celebration as at any Mass, except for the reception of Holy Communion. On their left shoulder, candidates should wear a name tag with their Confirmation name. These name tags should be prepared beforehand by the parish. Alternatively, the sponsor or candidate may announce the Confirmation name as described in #27 of the ritual.

After the proclamation of the Gospel, the candidates are presented to the celebrant by the catechetical leader or Confirmation catechist. As their names are called, candidates stand in place and remain standing until all candidates have been called. They are then seated and the celebrant gives the homily. Please include in your homily Bishop McManus' prayerful best wishes and his regret at not being able to be with them personally.



After the homily, the celebrant returns to the chair and invites the candidates to stand. He then proceeds with the renewal of baptismal promises. After the renewal of baptismal promises, the celebrant invites the candidates to kneel. Remaining at the chair, the celebrant proceeds with the “laying on of hands” with hands outstretched over all the candidates.

Before the candidates leave their pews, the celebrant puts on a mask, takes the sacred Chrism and comes to the head of the main aisle. Before leaving their pews, an usher (or catechist) gives each candidate an “alcohol prep pad” or individual “antiseptic” wipe with which the candidate disinfects his or her forehead. The used pad or wipe is then placed in a receptacle held by the usher. (These supplies – containing 70% alcohol -- are available at local pharmacies or online.) Taking care to maintain proper “social distancing,” the candidates with their sponsors approach the celebrant for the anointing. As he makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed, the

celebrant says: “N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit” to which the newly confirmed responds “Amen.” Then, **without shaking hands**, the celebrant offers the sign of peace saying, “Peace be with you” to which the newly confirmed responds “And with your spirit.”

After all the candidates have been confirmed, the celebrant, assisted by the server, and using lemon and bread, washes his hands. The oil soaked lemon and bread should be burned or buried after the Mass. He then returns to the chair and Mass continues with the General Intercessions.

## Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation with the Elect



On April 2, Bishop McManus dispensed all the Elect from the celebration of the second and third scrutinies. In his letter to pastors on May 25<sup>th</sup>, Bishop gave permission to celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation “outside the usual time.” (See RCIA §26 and §34.2)

Since the same restrictions as for any Mass, including the appropriate provisions for social distancing and liturgical adaptations must be strictly observed, parishes may need to schedule multiple celebrations.<sup>2</sup> However, these celebrations should be scheduled at Lord’s Day Masses.

Family members who live in the same household may be seated in the same pew with the candidate seated at the outer edge closest to the main aisle. If the sponsor or proxy ([click to download proxy form](#)) does not live in this same household, he or she might be seated in the next available pew behind the family. All participants must wear masks throughout the celebration as at any Mass, except for the reception of Holy Communion.

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<sup>2</sup> See *Orantes* May 18.

The rites may be found at RCIA §§218-236. §§218-225 and should take place with the candidate(s), sponsor(s) and families remaining in their pew. The celebrant goes to the font with a server for the Prayer over the Water §222 (using one of the formulae A – E as appropriate). The celebrant then continues with the renunciation of sin and profession of faith §§224-225.



After the profession of faith, the candidate and godparent approach the font. Having put on a mask, the celebrant, taking water from the font, pours it over the head of the candidate which is extended over a separate receptacle held by the masked server, and pronounces the baptismal formula given at 226b. The newly baptized, together with his or her godparent, goes to a place along the front of the sanctuary and waits for other candidates to be baptized. As each newly baptized takes a place along the front of the sanctuary, proper social distancing must be strictly observed.

After the candidates have been baptized, the celebrant goes to a place in front of the altar and, with the assistance of masked servers, continues with the Explanatory Rites as given at §§229-230.

The celebrant then administers the sacrament of Confirmation §§233-235, going to each candidate for the anointing, without, however, shaking hands at the exchange of peace.

After Confirmation, all return to their places and Mass continues with the General Intercessions.

## Confirmation of Validly Baptized Catholics

In his letter of May 25, Bishop also delegated pastors to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation to those adults who prepared for the sacrament “together with catechumens.” See notes on “Confirmation” above.

## The Reception of Validly Baptized Non-Catholics into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church

This ritual is found in RCIA at §§490-494. It includes the Profession of Faith and the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. All directives given for the celebration of Mass in the May 18<sup>th</sup> special edition of *Orantes* must be strictly observed as well as those given above for Confirmation. The celebrant does not need special permission to confirm these candidates.



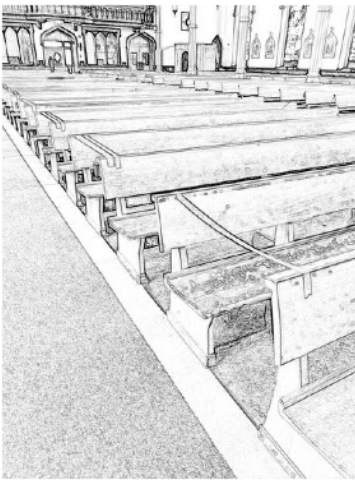
## First Communion

Since these Masses must be celebrated with the same restrictions as for any Mass, including the appropriate provisions for social distancing and liturgical adaptations, parishes may need to schedule multiple celebrations. (See *Orantes* May 18) Scheduling these celebrations is a local parish decision.

Given the tender age of these children, an adult, preferably a parent, may come forward with the child at the moment of reception.

## Additional Questions on Phase I

In the course of the first week of reopening, Priests and other pastoral leaders have worked assiduously to faithfully implement the guidelines mandated by Bishop McManus in his decree of 18 May 2020. As many of these Priests have also sought the guidance of the Office for Divine Worship in implementing these guidelines, the following clarifications are offered for the benefit of our readers.



### **Should bulletins be distributed at the end of Mass?**

Epidemiologists caution against the distribution of printed materials to the faithful at Mass. The risk if such materials are left on a table or in a box is that repeated accidental contact with surfaces may leave traces of the virus. The risk if ushers pass out bulletins at the end of Mass stems from the additional violation of social distance between the usher and members of the Congregation and the interruption of an ordered and socially distant exit from the Church. Pastors are, therefore, encouraged to distribute bulletins either electronically or by mail for the immediate future.

### **How should hosts for the faithful be safely consecrated?**

A ciborium or other vessel with hosts for distribution to the faithful should be placed on a corporal at some distance from the breath of the celebrant. The ciborium should be covered with a pall except from the epiclesis through the words of consecration.

### **Is the true maximum capacity of a Church always forty percent of building capacity?**

No. The true maximum capacity should be the number of seats possible while maintaining a minimal social distance of six feet up to a maximum of forty percent of building capacity.

### **Can the family provide readers for Funerals?**

Reservations concerning the use of readers or other ministers seated in the congregation grow from the repeated contact with surfaces on the pew and ambo. Priests may choose to discourage ministers from sitting in the congregation or find a way to wipe down the pew and ambo immediately after their service is completed.

### **What resource can you suggest for online reservations for Mass?**

We have prepared a tutorial on the use of [signupgenious.com](https://signupgenious.com) which is available [by clicking this link.](#)



### **Where can I get hand sanitizer and sanitizing spray to clean the pews?**

A Flo Chemical Corporation in Ashburnham (<https://www.zeinproducts.com/shop>) produces an alcohol based (80%) medical grade hand sanitizer with an emollient to prevent excessive skin drying. It can be diluted for use as spray sanitizer for surfaces and is available in 5 gallon, 1 gallon, and 8 ounce containers. It can be picked up from their location at 20 Puffer St., Ashburnham.

### **Where can I buy face masks and coverings?**

Surgical/dental face masks and a wide variety of face coverings are readily available on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) from a variety of manufacturers as well as [wbmason.org](https://www.wbmason.org).

Parishioners, like the general public, are expected to arrive already wearing their own mask. Exceptions include children under the age of 2 and those unable to wear a mask or face covering due to a medical condition.

### **What if more people show up than the 40% maximum allowed?**

Any people who show up after the maximum has been reached must be turned away and the doors should be locked. Such overflow crowds can be avoided, however, by the use of reservation apps like [SignUpGenius.com](https://www.signupgenius.com). For a



tutorial in this app, [click this link](#), or go to the [worcesterdiocese.org](http://worcesterdiocese.org) Pandemic Resource Page.

**Should I still stream Masses?**

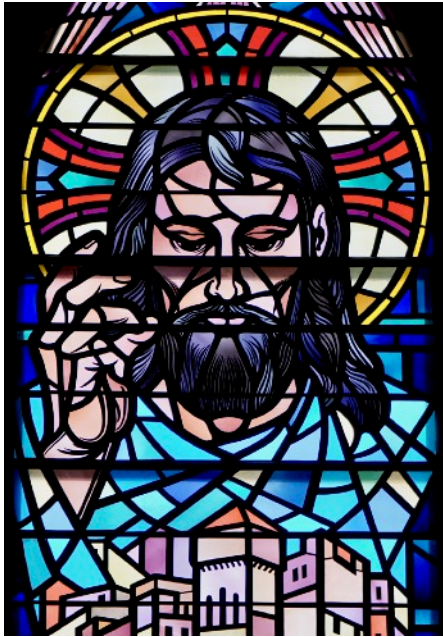
Yes! Many of your parishioners from the more vulnerable population will choose to stay home until the pandemic has truly ended. One of the best ways you can reach them is by providing the streaming Mass.

**Can small groups like AA begin meeting again?**

Small group meetings may be held in well ventilated open spaces provided that no more than ten people gather, a social distance of six feet is maintained between all participants and common surfaces are disinfected before and after each meeting.



## 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.