



DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE

THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS WHEN PUBLIC GATHERINGS RESUME

SUMMARY

The Diocese of Syracuse has established *Instructions for the Celebration of the Sacraments When Public Gatherings Resume*. This document establishes a set of general principals and provides instructions for the celebration of each sacrament. The goal is to return to worship in a safe and healthy manner, the realization of which will be a gradual process. It is important to read and become familiar with the entire document. As there will be significant changes from how we practiced before the pandemic, below is a summary of what to expect when returning to public Mass both from the perspective of the parish and the parishioner.

PASTORS AND PARISHES

- Pastors will read the *Instructions* and then complete and submit the *Requirements for the Resumption of Public Worship: Parish Pandemic Form* to the Office of the Bishop. This ensures the parish has the ability and is ready to meet the requirements in place for public gatherings to resume.
- Parishes are required to ensure the following:

Indoor Masses

- ❖ Clean, sanitize and ventilate the church building before and after each Mass
- ❖ Clearly mark seating capacity and the specific areas of seating, allowing for social distancing (6 ft. apart)
- ❖ Post signage or visual marking for traffic flow for entry, exit, and movement
- ❖ Provide sufficient, well positioned hand sanitizer for celebrant, liturgical ministers and members of the assembly
- ❖ Remove all hymnals, missalettes and other shared items of high touch exposure
- ❖ Train ushers on all aspects of the parish plan (e.g., entry, seating, distribution of Holy Communion, use of bathrooms, exit, etc.)
- ❖ Develop and communicate a system of registration for Mass attendance as well as procedures for Mass participation
- ❖ Adhere to modified liturgical instructions
- ❖ The distribution of Holy Communion and other procedures are to be explained to the faithful before Mass

Outdoor Masses in Parking Lots

- ❖ Traffic routes should be marked
- ❖ Parking spaces that allow for appropriate distance should be designated
- ❖ An area or “stage” visibly accessible to all for the celebration of Mass in a worthy manner should be created
- ❖ A system for amplification of sound should be used
- ❖ The distribution of Holy Communion and other procedures are to be explained to the faithful before Mass

PARISHIONERS

- In order to permit the celebration of Mass and the sacraments in a dignified, safe, and healthy manner, each parishioner must do the following:
 - ❖ Seek information from his/her parish regarding the Mass schedule, registration for Mass, and policies/ procedures for attending Mass
 - ❖ Remain home if sick, symptomatic or vulnerable (i.e. 65 and older with an underlying health condition or immune deficiency)
 - ❖ Wear a face mask in church (required) and, if possible, bring personal hand sanitizer
 - ❖ Observe the commands on the posted signage and follow the directives of the ushers
 - ❖ Acknowledge that seating will be different from the “usual” pew
 - ❖ Be aware that during this period, there will be:
 - No holy water in fonts
 - No choirs
 - No offertory procession
 - No passing of the collection basket; baskets will be made available for offerings
 - No physical exchange of the sign of peace
 - No hymnals or missalettes
 - No congregating in the church: in the narthex, at the doors, in parking lots, etc.
 - ❖ Prepare for the reception of Holy Communion:
 - Masks will be worn by all: clergy, ministers, and the faithful
 - Direction will be provided for those receiving
 - The Precious Blood will not be offered
 - Tongs may be used
 - Reception will involve: receiving the Body of Christ in the hand, stepping aside, removing the mask, consuming the Eucharist, returning the mask
 - Reception on the tongue is recommended against by the CDC, WHO, and a blue-ribbon panel of Catholic doctors; consequently, it may only take place at the end of the Communion line
 - At outdoor Masses, follow the direction of the attendants: remaining in vehicles until the reception of Holy Communion and then returning to vehicles for the dismissal

The *Instructions for the Celebration of the Sacraments When Gatherings Begin* and this *Summary* are helpful tools for creating safe and healthy environments for the celebration of Mass and the sacraments. Since the ability to gather publicly is a gradual process, the *Instructions* and *Summary* may need to be altered to accommodate each new phase of re-opening. Communication of regular updates is, therefore, key to the observance of these necessary safety procedures.

Questions may be directed to: Mrs. Danielle E. Cummings, Chancellor/Director of Communications at 315.470.1476, Father Christopher Seibt, Director of the Office of Liturgy at 315.470.1420, or to info@syrдио.org.