



DIOCESE
of
LAFAYETTE-IN-INDIANA

MEMO

To: Pastors and Administrators

From: Sandra Santucci, Office of Divine Worship

Date: May 24, 2021

Re: Updated COVID-19 Mass Restrictions

Recently, the CDC and the State of Indiana have updated guidelines regarding COVID-19 protocols (masks, social distancing and cleaning). That, in conjunction with the increased availability and accessibility of the COVID-19 vaccines have caused us to review our own diocesan guidelines and the decree issued by Bishop Doherty on March 17, 2020.

Beginning Saturday, June 12, 2021, at 8 a.m. Bishop Doherty has decided that the general obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation (including the Saturday/Vigil Mass) is to be reinstated (CIC, can. 1247). Effective immediately, he is further lifting any and all restrictions from the original COVID-19 decree of March 17, 2020 and its extensions from May 8, 2020 and June 26, 2020. Pastors, in conjunction with their leadership teams, pastoral council and guidance of local health officials, will make pastoral decisions regarding masks, social distancing and cleaning protocols.

In charity, we must recall those who cannot be vaccinated and those who still fear the possible transmission of the COVID-19 virus to vulnerable family members. We recommend each pastor provide one weekend Mass that keeps full protocols in place, or some similar accommodations.

A few expectations for the continued health and safety of our parishioners:

- Distribution of the Precious Blood from a common chalice remains suspended.
- Hand sanitizer and masks shall be provided for the faithful at entrances of churches.
- Sign of Peace should take place without physical contact (ex: bow of the head or a wave to others)
- Hand sanitizer shall be used by Clergy and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion before and after distribution of Holy Communion.
 - Decisions about wearing masks during the distribution of Holy Communion is at the discretion of the local pastor and leadership. Where EMHC's were used pre-COVID they should be returned to ministry.



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- Holy Water fonts should be emptied after weekend Masses, cleaned and refilled as needed throughout the week. It is also suggested that pastors consider providing filled Holy Water bottles for parishioners to take home and bring to Mass.
- Clean, fresh water must be used for each baptism.
- The gifts of bread and wine should be kept from public areas and are to be brought directly from the credence table to the altar.
- Attempt to reduce the number of touchpoints as people enter the church by propping open doors or having one person open doors.
- If necessary, to ensure social distancing and to conform to public health regulations, Mass (including a nuptial) may be celebrated outside of the parish church, but preferably on parish grounds. Specific permission must be sought in advance from the Vicar General.

We continue to pray for those who have been impacted during this pandemic and those who lost loved ones. We pray the words of our Holy Father from the beginning of this pandemic and ask the Blessed Mother, during this month of May, to continue to watch over and guide us:

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope.

We entrust ourselves to you, O Mary, Health of the Sick.

At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus' pain, with steadfast faith.

You know what we need.

We are certain that you will provide, so that,

as you did at Cana of Galilee,

joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love,

to conform ourselves to the Father's will

and to do what Jesus tells us:

He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us,

through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.