Diocese of San Angelo
Phase 3, Version 1
COVID-19 Gathering Protocols
May 10, 2022

The following Phase Three Gathering Protocols become effective in the Diocese of San Angelo upon promulgation. These protocols relate to the use of church facilities for gatherings such as receptions, family reunions, funeral meals, baby or wedding showers, choir practices, meetings of parish or outside organizations, parish festivals, etc.

1. Civil regulations:

   Please follow state, county, and city regulations for gatherings.

2. Social distance

   All participants are to be respectful of those who choose to maintain social distancing.

3. Health protocols for attendees, clergy, staff, contractors, and volunteers:

   a. Those who have serious underlying medical conditions and those who are feeling sick are encouraged to stay home.

   b. All clergy, staff, contracted vendors, volunteers, and attendees are to self-screen and stay home or seek medical care if they have any of the following new or worsening signs or symptoms of possible COVID-19:

      Cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, loss of taste, loss of smell, diarrhea, feeling feverish, having a measured temperature greater than or equal to 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit, or known close contact with a person who is lab confirmed to have COVID-19.

   c. For those who have tested positive for COVID-19:
      - ♦ If their positive diagnosis was within the past 5 days, we encourage them to stay home or participate only remotely.
      - ♦ If their positive diagnosis was between 6 and 10 days ago, they may participate either remotely or in-person. However, we encourage them to wear a facemask if they participate in person.

   d. For those who have had close contact with COVID-19, participation will depend upon vaccination status:
      - ♦ For someone who is fully vaccinated, including all applicable boosters, the exposed individual does not need to quarantine, but we encourage them to wear a facemask at all times for a period of 10 days after exposure.
      - ♦ For someone who is not fully vaccinated or not up to date on any boosters, we encourage the exposed individual to participate remotely for the first 5 days; if no symptoms appear, they may attend the gathering after the initial 5 days, but we encourage them to wear a facemask at all times for a period of 10 days from exposure.

4. Facemasks:

Under current conditions and capacities, facemasks are not required but are optional. If any person chooses to wear a facemask for their own personal reasons, their choice is to be respected and there is to be no mocking nor bullying for anyone who chooses to wear a facemask.

In accordance with CDC guidelines, we recommend:

a) Properly fitting facemasks covering the nose, mouth, and chin with a nose wire to aid in closing gaps.

b) Facemasks should always be worn according to the manufacturer's directions.

c) Consistently wear the most protective mask possible. The CDC recommends N95 & KN95 facemasks. If these are not available, the following are ranked in order of priority:
    - Double layered disposable Procedure Masks (sometimes referred to as surgical masks).
    - Double layered cloth facemasks.
    - Double layered gaiter masks.
    - Single layered facemasks.

d) One can increase effectiveness and protection by wearing two masks in any combination.

5. Vehicles: The enclosed and insulated interior of a vehicle makes the driver and riders more prone to the transmission of the coronavirus. Therefore, if driving conditions permit, there should be an exchange of air, by rolling down windows or stopping and opening doors periodically.

6. Health protocols for the facilities where gatherings are held:

    a. The CDC has determined that the probability of coronavirus transmission from surfaces is extremely rare; therefore, parishes are no longer required to sanitize church building surfaces after each gathering. Gathering leaders may utilize a prudent cleaning and sanitization schedule appropriate to their needs.

    b. Hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, soap and water, or similar disinfectant may be made available.

    c. Ventilation: When possible, the circulation of outside air into the room should be increased.

7. Overnight retreats, conferences, and travel:

    As a possible resource for any gathering sponsoring organization, parish or other entity involved in hosting, or transporting participants to an event, the diocese has developed an optional Overnight Room and Travel Assignment Form. The form can be used as a resource to aid in organizing room and travel assignments. If the form is used, it should be kept with all other pertinent registration and medical release forms.

    a. The optional Overnight Room and Travel Assignment Form will have these options: a participant’s preference for a private room (additional costs may be incurred) and private travel, or rooming/traveling with a particular person, or rooming/traveling only with a fully vaccinated person(s), or if they have no preference and will room or travel with anyone assigned to them. If the participant is a minor, the selection(s) regarding the above options will be decided and signed by their parent or legal guardian. If the parent or guardian does not make a selection, the event organizers will make the decision based on the best available information.

b. For overnight stays where groups sleep in a large community setting (such as gymnasium, classroom, or youth center) attempts should be made to provide good ventilation and good spacing between participants.

8. Multiple-day events:

Multiple-day events are allowed under the same protocols listed above for any other gatherings; however, all attendees, staff, volunteers, and clergy must self-screen daily according to the criteria listed above.

Optional
Overnight Room and Travel Assignment Form

Name of Participant: _____

Name of Parent/Legal Guardian if Participant is a Minor: _____

Name of Parish, Sponsoring Organization: _____

Name of Event, Retreat or Conference: _____

Date(s) of Event, Retreat or Conference: _____to _____

PLEASE READ: This form may be used as a possible resource to aid in organizing room and travel assignments. This form should be kept with all other relevant registration and release forms.

ROOM SELECTION FOR OVERNIGHT STAYS WHERE SEPARATE ROOMS ARE AVAILABLE: (Initial Appropriate Choice)

_____ If available, I/we choose a private room. I/we understand that additional charges may be incurred.

_____ I/we choose to room with: _____

_____ I/we have been vaccinated and I/we choose to room with only another fully vaccinated person.

_____ I/we have no preference for room assignment and will room with anyone assigned to me.

TRAVEL SELECTION: (Initial Appropriate Choice)

_____ I/we choose to travel via private vehicle. I/we understand that we are responsible for all travel to and from the venue.

_____ I/we choose to travel with: _____

_____ I/we have been vaccinated and I/we choose to travel with only other fully vaccinated persons.

_____ I/we have no preference for travel assignment and will travel with anyone assigned to me.

<u>If the participant is a minor, the selection regarding the above options will be decided and initialed by their parent or legal guardian.</u>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: I/we acknowledge that there is no complete manner of protection from COVID-19 and any other danger or hazard; I/we also understand that prudent measures to mitigate exposure to known hazards will be taken; and finally, I/we understand that participation in group activities increases the risk of exposure and possible infection to COVID-19.

_____ _____

Signature of Adult or Parent/Guardian of a Minor Date