



DIOCESE OF LONDON

Directions and Recommendations for the First Stage of Reopening Churches

12 June 2020



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Reopening our Worship Spaces in the Diocese of London

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The directions and recommendations outlined in the attached document, entitled Directions and Recommendations for the First Stage of Reopening Churches, have been developed in light of guidelines prepared by the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario (ACBO) with experts in various fields, medical, legal, and risk-management.

Having consulted the Episcopal Council, I have approved the directives contained in this document and am requiring that they be implemented in all parishes and Catholic communities in the Diocese of London. In addition to these directives, the document includes recommendations, with a view to the need for pastoral adaptation at the local level. Through this document, we want to ensure that we reopen our churches in a manner which is prudent and responsible and which allows for the reverent celebration of the Eucharist and the other sacraments and rites of worship.

The implementation of these directives is not a guarantee that viruses, such as the Coronavirus COVID-19, will not be contracted, but they are the best and most practical measures we know at present to ensure the safety of our people.

We are all happy to see some return to public worship, but we realize that many are still uncertain or unable to join us. For that reason, I extend the dispensation from the Sunday obligation to all the faithful of the Diocese, at least until the First Sunday of Advent. Time will tell whether this dispensation will need to be extended further or whether, by then, our worshiping communities will be able to return to full strength.

I am grateful to our priests, deacons and lay ecclesial ministers, along with all parish staff members, who have worked tirelessly to support their parishioners in this very difficult time when our churches were closed, and I thank them for their cooperation and assistance in implementing these measures. I thank you, the faithful of our diocese, for your patience and collaboration as we work together to ensure the safety of all, so that we can keep our churches open and gather to celebrate our Catholic faith.

Uniting ourselves in prayer, and seeking the intercession of our diocesan patrons, the Blessed Mother and St. Patrick, we ask for God's protection, peace, and healing. I assure you of daily remembrance in my prayer.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Ronald P. Fabbro, C.S.B.
Bishop of London



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DIRECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FIRST STAGE OF REOPENING CHURCHES 12 JUNE 2020

In the Diocese of London, the opening of churches is permitted for weekday Mass, private prayer, and individual Confessions effective Wednesday, 17 June 2020, and for Sunday Masses, effective Saturday/Sunday, 20-21 June 2020. Parishes which cannot be ready by then may delay their opening to the following Saturday/Sunday, 27-28 June 2020. If a pastor/administrator is unable to open a church safely, following these directions and recommendations, he is to contact the Bishop's office.

Prior to the opening of churches and adjacent facilities, the following directions must be implemented in all Catholic churches, and where applicable, all parish halls where the public may attend.

1. The Universal Application of Physical Distancing

In all cases, when community gatherings take place, or when individuals are using the church or other facilities, a physical distance of two metres (six feet) is to be strictly maintained. This is necessary to avoid:

- personal contact;
- transmission of any particle fluid/spray from one's mouth or nose;
- deposit residue on surfaces from one's hands or face.

2. Temperature Monitoring

Those who will be involved in ministry during the Mass, or any other sacraments, must take their temperature before arriving at the church. Any individual whose temperature is above 37.5°C/100°F or who shows any compatible symptoms must not enter the church, and should ask for medical help. Priests who are ill must not celebrate Mass.

3. Cleaning of Churches and Related Facilities

- Pastors/administrators of Families of Parishes or parish clusters may choose to open one or more sites at their discretion during the pandemic.

- Churches should always be clean and tidy; however, in times of pandemic, extra care and attention must be taken to ensure that surfaces remain as clean as possible to reduce the transmission of infection.
- All staff engaged in cleaning (including the handling of soiled laundry or waste materials) must wear masks and disposable gloves. Masks must be disposed of when dirty, or no later than the end of the day. Gloves should be changed as often as necessary, usually at the end of any task or after cleaning a washroom.
- All surfaces (floors, seating, kneelers) must be wiped at least once per week with warm water containing sanitizing agents that are related to killing germs; carpets must be vacuumed. All pew fronts and the tops and sides of benches must be wiped with a sanitizing agent after each event. Disinfectant cleanser to be used should not be damaging to wooden surfaces, but should be germicidal, meaning having an alcohol content of 70% or 0.5% hydrogen peroxide or 0.1% sodium hypochlorite (bleach) or electrolyzed water (hypochlorous acid). See Appendix I.
- During the week, if the church is open for private prayer or for liturgies with small groups, it is recommended that seating be restricted to one area so as to eliminate the cleaning of other areas.
- It is generally accepted that any surface contagion on floors, pews and other surfaces will live no longer than 72 hours. If there are gaps of 72 hours between uses of the church, no further cleaning/disinfecting need take place.
- When someone falls sick in the church, the area within a two-metre (six-foot) radius is to be thoroughly cleaned before it can be used again.

Washrooms

Church washrooms are to be restricted to use when absolutely necessary only. No more than one person/family (living at the same address) at a time should use a washroom. Notices to this effect must be posted outside the washroom. Hand-washing signs should be placed in the washroom. Any washroom that is soiled must be closed, pending cleaning with disinfectant.

Water Fountains

Water fountains or coolers must remain out of service during the duration of the pandemic.

Disinfectant Hand Sanitizer Dispensing Machines

Each church should have a minimum of two of these devices at the entrance and exits doors of the church. Each parishioner should be directed to sanitize their hands when entering the church. These devices should be touchless and must be maintained.

Holy Water Fonts

Holy water fonts must remain empty until further notice.

Sacred Vessels

All sacred vessels used in the liturgy shall be cleaned with warm soapy water and hot rinse after they have been purified following each Mass.

4. Posting of Notices

It is important to post notices in prominent places at all entrances to the church regarding the requirements for entering the church and participating in any liturgical celebrations. Notices should include the following directives:

- Entrance is not permitted to those who have an elevated temperature, or are suffering from cough, sputum production, shortness of breath, undue fatigue, loss of appetite, muscle aching, runny nose, chills involving shakes, loss of taste or smell. Those who feel sick, are expected to stay home.
- Be sure to follow the guidance of the ushers/ministers of hospitality and sit only in the designated places to ensure physical distancing at all times.
- Avoid touching your face or other persons.
- All persons over the age of eight are strongly encouraged to wear a mask.

The notice may also include information regarding overflow seating or additional Sunday Masses being provided in the parish on Sunday. Announcements regarding the reception of Communion and egress are best made during and at the conclusion of the liturgy.

5. Preparing the Church for the Liturgy

In addition to cleaning and disinfecting the church and adjacent facilities before the use of the church for the liturgy or for personal prayer, the following directives shall to be observed:

Volunteers

Training for volunteers must take place before opening for Mass. See Appendix II.

Signage

In addition to notices mentioned above, signs should be posted at the entrance(s) of the church listing times of liturgical celebrations and times when the church will be open for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and personal prayer.

Church Entrances

Where possible, weather permitting, it is recommended that the doors of the church should be open to avoid contact with handles. If this is not possible, ushers, wearing masks and disposable gloves, should assist. In addition, signs are to be posted

regarding who may enter, the use of Personal Protective Equipment and distancing, as noted above.

In order to avoid surface contact, all printed material such as bulletins, pamphlets and newspapers should be removed. Areas for the sale of religious articles and votive candles should be closed.

Hymnals, Prayer Books, Envelopes

All hymnals, prayer books and other papers shall be removed from the pews during the pandemic.

Elevators

Only one person (with an assistant, as needed) is to use the elevator, preferably with an attendant who will ensure that doors and handles are kept clean after each use.

Seating

During the pandemic, to ensure that physical distancing takes place, each church must be cordoned off in such a way as to promote two-metre (six-foot) distances. Seats should be designated by tape markings. Seating must be marked in such a way that there is alternation of patterns of every third row to guarantee spacing. Depending on the width of the aisles, seats at ends of pews may need to be blocked. See Appendix III.

Floors and Aisles

In high traffic areas (entrances and aisles) tape must be used to designate spacing of two-metre (six-foot) increments and also indicate the direction of movement for the Communion procession. The tape should be a bright colour and distinguished from the colour of the floor surface. It should be of sufficient quality to remain in place and so that it can be removed or repaired without harm to the surfaces. The tape should be inspected every weekend to ensure it is in good condition and remains visible.

Disabled Area

Those who attend church with a personal mobility device should be placed in a designated area with sufficient space to allow a two-metre (six-foot) space between each person.

Sanctuary

Seating in the sanctuary should be limited and must be arranged to ensure physical distancing.

Sacristy

Entrance to the sacristy shall be limited to those who are required to prepare for the liturgy. If the room is small and does not allow for the required distancing, one person at a time should use the room. All surfaces in the room are to be kept clean.

Crying Rooms

Crying rooms must be closed.

Overflow Crowds and Standing Room

This is discouraged unless there is sufficient space to allow for distancing, and for aisles to be clear so that traffic is not impeded.

Washrooms

In addition to cleaning and disinfecting the washroom(s), a sign is to be posted indicating that they are to be used only in necessity, and only by one person or family at a time. A sanitizing fluid device (preferably touchless) should be placed outside each washroom.

Meeting Rooms

All adjacent meeting rooms shall remain closed during Mass.

Confessionals and Reconciliation Chapels

Most confessionals and reconciliation chapels are too small to ensure physical distancing. A larger room elsewhere in the parish complex should be used. In addition to the opportunity for face-to-face Confession, a portable kneeler with a screen should be in place for the penitent who wishes to remain anonymous, provided the penitent wears a mask and disposable gloves. The penitent should wipe the door handle with disinfectant upon leaving the room and then dispose of gloves in a container provided.

Capacity Control and Contact Tracing

Pastoral teams will face the challenge of determining how to ensure compliance with capacity restrictions when welcoming parishioners to Mass. To help regulate capacity, the team/staff at a church should first determine how many places are available through measurement and cordoning off sufficient pews and seats to maintain the regulated capacity. See Appendix One for a sample method to determine this.

To be able to determine when parishioners will arrive for Mass, one of the following methods may be used:

- an on-line reservation system such as EventBrite, Survey Monkey, or Sign-Up Genius;
- allow parishioners to telephone the parish office to indicate their preferred time to attend Mass;
- a “first come, first served” basis.

In the event of an outbreak (even one person) of the virus at any Mass, the parish should alert all those who attended that Mass so that they can get medical assistance and be quarantined. When parishioners are making their reservation, therefore, the parish should collect the surname, number of members of the household attending, and

their telephone number. This, or some other means of knowing who attended any particular Mass, should be collected to provide “contact tracing” in the event of an outbreak. Parishioners or visitors who arrive without a reservation should also be asked for their name and phone number for the same reason. One surname and phone number per group is sufficient.

6. Churches Open for Prayer

Since most adoration chapels are too small to ensure physical distancing, they must remain closed during the pandemic if social distancing cannot be assured and enforced. However, a church may be open for determined times for prayer and adoration. Times when a church is open should be posted. Seating should be limited to specific areas for later cleaning.

Supervision

Churches should never be left open unsupervised. Compliance with physical distancing should be enforced by an attendant in charge. Any refusal to comply should be reported to the Pastor or member of the pastoral staff.

7. Schedule for Masses

Pastors/administrators, for the duration of the pandemic, may adjust the timing of Masses and the number of Masses celebrated within their Family of Parishes, or their parish cluster, to meet the needs of their communities. They should take into consideration the time needed to clean the church between Masses, and the number of spaces available for each Mass.

Pastors/administrators of Families of Parishes or parish clusters may choose to open one or more sites at their discretion during the pandemic.

8. Directives for the Celebration of All Masses

Arrival

Parishioners should be encouraged to arrive early for Mass, since welcoming, screening, and seating will take more time than usual. Volunteers should be ready to receive parishioners 45 minutes prior to the start of Mass.

Sacristy

Entrance to the sacristy must be limited to those who are required to prepare for the liturgy. If the room is small and does not allow for the required distancing, one person at a time should use the room. All surfaces in the room are to be kept clean.

The Assembly

All in the assembly (eight years of age and older, with the exception of the priest and ministers) are strongly encouraged to wear a mask upon the recommendation of the Canadian Medical Officer of Health.

Ministers of Hospitality

Ushers or ministers of hospitality are to be present before Mass at the entrance(s) to the church to direct people to the hand sanitizers and to their seats while observing physical distancing. Ushers/greeters shall wear masks and gloves while carrying out their ministry.

Priests and Deacons

Priests and deacons must wash their hands before and after Mass, and use sanitizer before and after distributing Holy Communion. They must not wear disposable gloves during the liturgy. Masks, however, must be worn for the distribution of Holy Communion. Wearing a mask during the entire liturgy, though not necessary, is optional.

Music during Mass

Singing is a major way in which moist particulate is pushed out of the body through breathing and projecting one's voice. Parishioners attending at Mass shall be directed not to sing on account of the potential spreading of airborne contagion. A cantor, accompanied by a single instrumentalist, may sing at Mass as long as the cantor is a minimum of 3 metres (10 feet) distance from anyone else. Choir members may join only if the same minimum of 3 metres (10 feet) distance can be maintained.

Consequently, all the parts of the ordinary of the Mass which are normally sung at Sunday Masses, including the Glory to God, the Psalm, the Eucharistic acclamations, and the Lamb of God, must be recited. This practice allows the congregation to take their rightful part in the celebration.

Entrance Procession

The entrance procession takes place directly from the sacristy. If the sacristy is located at the main entrance to the church, every effort should be made to maintain physical distancing (i.e., by having people seated away from the centre aisle). The cantor may sing an entrance hymn in accordance with these guidelines. It is recommended that only the priest (and deacon) and possibly a single server participate in the procession. The Book of the Gospels should be placed on the altar before Mass.

The Introductory Rites

The priest leads the Introductory Rites in the usual manner from the chair. The presider must use a simple lectern for the prayers, rather than have a server hold the book.

Liturgy of the Word

The Liturgy of the Word takes place in the usual manner. In order to minimize contact with the Lectionary, it is recommended that only one lector proclaim the Scripture readings from the Lectionary already placed on the ambo. The lector should be seated in the assembly close to the ambo. After the proclamation of the first reading, the Psalm is recited by the lector at the ambo. Following the second reading, the lector removes the Lectionary so that the priest (or deacon) can proclaim the Gospel. No candles are used for the Gospel. The Creed is professed and the Prayers of the Faithful are offered. The petitions are announced by the deacon at the ambo, or the priest at the chair.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

The celebration of the Children's Liturgy of the Word must not take place during the pandemic.

Offertory / Presentation of the Gifts

The monetary collection is omitted at the usual time, and the bread and wine are not presented in procession as usual. The collection is to be received at the doors of the church at the end of Mass, where people can place their donations in baskets supervised by ushers from a safe distance. The bread and wine are placed on the credence table near the altar before Mass. If the credence table is placed beside the altar, there is no need for a server to assist at the altar.

Credence Table

In addition to all that is needed for the Eucharistic Prayer and Communion, hand sanitizer should be placed on the credence table to be used by the priest and ministers before and after distributing Holy Communion.

Vessels on the Altar

It is recommended, where possible, to place the ciboria containing altar breads, to be consecrated for the assembly, at some distance from the priest's chalice and paten. If the ciboria have covers, these may remain in place during the Eucharistic Prayer.

Eucharistic Prayer

The Eucharistic Prayer is prayed by the priest with the assembly making the usual responses and acclamations, all of which are recited. Whenever the priest is praying with hands joined, it is important that his hands not be near his face.

Communion Rite

The Greeting of Peace is maintained; however, there must be no contact such as shaking hands during the pandemic. A simple bow of the head towards one's neighbour may be offered as a sign of peace.

Concelebrants and deacons shall receive Communion from separate chalices. Communion from the Cup must not be given to the congregation.

Communion is normally distributed by a priest, deacon or extraordinary ministers of Communion. If a priest, for reason of age or pre-existing condition, does not feel comfortable distributing Communion, he may delegate that to another minister. All ministers of Communion, after receiving Communion themselves, must sanitize their hands before and after distributing the Eucharist. They must wear a mask during distribution.

On the direction of medical authorities, Communion must be distributed only in the hand. The reception of Communion on the tongue will be restored as an option as soon as the public health officials allow it.

Ushers, respecting their own distance, should direct communicants to the minister of Communion at the proper time to ensure physical distancing.

Communicants are to be instructed to come to the front of the line where is marked a two-metre (six-foot) line away from the minister of Communion. After the dialogue (The Body of Christ / Amen), they step forward to receive the Host, taking it in their hand (the dominant hand placed under the other). They step to the side (a proper distance marked on the floor), remove their mask from behind one ear, consume the Host, replace the mask, and then return to their place in the pew.

Following the distribution of Holy Communion, the remaining Eucharist is placed in the tabernacle in the usual manner. All vessels are placed on the credence table, to be taken by a server or sacristan to the sacristy following Mass. There they are to be purified and then washed with soapy water.

Communion to the Sick and Homebound

Only members of the same household may take Holy Communion to those who are sick or homebound. If those ministering to their family are not already officially mandated by the Bishop for this ministry, Bishop Fabbro gives this permission for the duration of the pandemic. Pastors/administrators must ensure these family members are properly instructed in the ministry.

The pyxes, which have been prepared with altar breads, must be placed on the credence table before Mass. After the Prayer after Communion, they are presented to those who will bring Holy Communion. When arriving at their home, they should wash their hands in the usual manner, before distributing Communion.

Concluding Rites

The concluding rites take place in the usual manner. Any necessary announcements may be made. In particular, people could be reminded to place their offerings in the baskets provided. They should be reminded to follow the direction of the ushers or ministers of hospitality when exiting the church in an orderly way, while maintaining

physical distancing. Parishioners should be instructed to leave the church without spending social time with the priest or other parishioners at the door or in the parking lot. The use of printed bulletins shall be suspended so as to reduce physical contact.

9. Other Rites Celebrated in the Church

Since these rites take place in the worship space, the requirements for preparing the space, physical distancing, the use of music and procedures for liturgical ministers as they apply to the particular rite are to be observed.

Baptism

The Baptism of infants and young children must not be celebrated during Mass at this time, nor are they to be celebrated communally, i.e., with several families at the same time.

With the exception of maintaining physical distancing among family and friends, and the priest or deacon sanitizing his hands before and after the pouring of water and anointing, the sacrament of Baptism is celebrated in the usual manner according to the Rite of Baptism. The water in the font is to be replaced after each baptism.

Priests and deacons are to wear masks for the celebration of baptism for the protection of the infants and children being baptized.

Christian Initiation of Adults

The Christian Initiation of Adults (including children of catechetical age) is celebrated during Mass, since the rite includes the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist. The Reception into Full Communion is also to be celebrated during Mass. It is strongly recommended that these rites not take place at this time during the Sunday Mass.

Marriage

Marriages may be celebrated with small communities, according to the number of people permitted by health authorities. As of this date, the limit is set at ten people. The norms for physical distancing pertain to all present with the exception of the bride and groom.

Reconciliation

Provisions for General Absolution have been made for the communities in the Diocese of London. Pastors/administrators may choose to offer this possibility for Penance according to the directives of Bishop Fabbro previously released (*cf* his letter dated 12 June 2020, and “Message Regarding Reopening our Churches, Celebrating Postponed Sacraments and General Absolution”, 27 May 2020).

Opportunities for the celebration of individual confessions should be posted for the faithful. The need for social distancing is to be maintained between the priest and the penitent. For those waiting to celebrate the sacrament, social distancing must be observed. Both priests and penitents must wear masks. The penitent also wears gloves.

Funerals

Funeral Masses may be celebrated in the church, according to the number of people permitted by health authorities. As of this date, the limit is set at ten people. Priests and deacons must collaborate with Funeral Home staff to take all the necessary precautions to ensure the health and safety of all who participate.

First Communion and Confirmation

The scheduling of First Communion and Confirmation has been addressed elsewhere and should be postponed until the fall. These celebrations should be scheduled in conjunction with the local parochial schools (*cf* "Message Regarding Reopening our Churches, Celebrating Postponed Sacraments and General Absolution", 27 May 2020).

There follow three appendices:

1. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Other Requirements for Parishes and Diocesan Facilities
2. Guidelines for Volunteers
3. Preparing Churches in Advance of the Official Opening



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Appendix I Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Other Requirements for Parishes and Diocesan Facilities

This document addresses the PPE needed for the reopening of churches and other facilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Parishioners are expected to provide their own PPE. In particular, all parishioners over the age of 8 are strongly encouraged to wear their own mask. The following items have been identified as requirements in each parish and facility prior to opening:

1. Masks for priests, deacons, parish teams, ushers, readers, servers, money counters and all other volunteers involved in the Mass or other church gatherings. Parishioners are to bring their own mask. Acceptable masks are single use examination masks (only to be used for single use) and washable, re-usable cotton masks. The instructions from Health Canada on how to wear a mask can be found [here](#) or by visiting www.canada.ca.
2. Disposable (latex medical examination type or equivalent) gloves are to be available for ushers, cleaners and money counters. Gloves are for single use and are not to be re-used. Once used, they are to be disposed of in the garbage.
3. Hand sanitizer along with dispenser is to be available at the entrance and exits of the church, in the sanctuary, near the tabernacle, at the money counting table and at the entrance to the office. Hand sanitizer levels should be inspected before and after each Mass or gathering, to ensure adequate supply.
4. Many cleaning solutions will damage pews and wooden liturgical furnishings. The cleaning solution must kill the virus without damaging wood. Pews are to be cleaned after each use, prior to the next use. The cleaning solution is to be sprayed on the rag and then wiped on the pews, touch points, etc. Do not spray the cleaning solution directly onto the material to be cleaned. Rags are to be washed in a washing machine and dried in a dryer after each complete cleaning. The approved product for this use is Neutra-Lyze Natural Disinfectant, available through the source noted below. This is a Canadian-made, green product.
5. Tape will be needed to mark the nave aisles and pews. Painters or masking tape is to be used. Tape should be inspected before and after each Mass or gathering, to ensure it is intact.
6. Diocesan provided warning and instructional signs are to be posted in the most appropriate area in each church.

7. Sneeze guards/plexiglass shields are required to protect the reception desks/areas in each office. In addition, any rooms in which social distancing (minimum 2m) is not practical, sneeze guards will be required. Portable sneeze guards that are a minimum of 2' x 2' are an excellent option as they can be moved from room to room as needed. This type of sneeze guard is made of plexiglass and comes with a stand, much like a television.
8. Washrooms are to be cleaned prior to each Mass or gathering. Most typical washroom cleaners are adequate. Check with your supplier or refer to the Health Canada website for a listing.

Parishes may source PPE from suppliers themselves; however, the Diocese is offering a supply arrangement in order to benefit from volume pricing discounts. We have partnered with the Archdiocese of Toronto who has negotiated competitive, bulk pricing.

This purchasing program is with Basic's Office Products, who have locations across our Diocese. This program also provides bulk pricing on office supplies and furniture. Those parishes that want to participate will need to register for an on-line ordering account. Shipments and invoicing will go directly to each parish.

The Diocese will do an initial bulk purchase order of essential supplies. This initial bulk purchase will be paid for by the Diocese. After this initial order, parishes will be responsible for their own ordering and for monitoring supply levels. Please ensure supply levels are closely monitored so that orders can be placed in time to replenish.

The Diocese is buying enough PPE to provide each parish with the following:

1. Hand sanitizer – two 4L liquid jugs (Item # 89950-00). Dispenser will not be provided. This is liquid (not gel) so a spray bottle can be used to dispense.
2. Face masks (washable up to 12 times) – one box of 100 (Item # 89954-00)
3. Neutra-Lyze Natural Disinfectant Diocese Approved Cleaner for cleaning pews and other liturgical furnishings (not to be used on fabric) – two 4L jugs (Item # TBA). Dispenser and rags will not be provided. This is liquid (not gel) so a spray bottle can be used to dispense.
4. We are unable to source protective gloves at this time. The PPE will be shipped to the Episcopal Vicar for each Deanery. The Episcopal Vicar will allocate the PPE to each parish at his discretion, based on size of parish and need. Parishes are to pick-up PPE once contacted by your local Episcopal Vicar.



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Appendix II Guidelines for Volunteers

All Volunteers involved in assisting at weekend and weekday Masses and any other time the church is to be open must adhere to the following directives:

1. Wearing of a mask with ear straps for ease of one side removal and slipping back on.
2. Wearing of gloves if available.
3. Hand washing and sanitizing.
4. Maintaining a two-meter/six-foot distance.
5. Temperature taken at home.
6. If you exhibit any of symptoms, have an elevated temperature or are suffering from cough, sputum production, shortness of breath, undue fatigue, loss of appetite, muscle aching, runny nose, chills involving shakes, loss of taste or smell, feeling ill, you are not permitted to enter the church.

The guidelines below for each volunteer ministry are general descriptions for the necessary roles needed for Mass. There will need to be adaption at the local level based on church design and layout in many of these areas. Also, at other times when the church may be open, some of these same guidelines will also need to be engaged.

Ushers

Ushers should arrive a minimum of 30 to 45 minutes before the scheduled Mass time. Masks and gloves will be supplied if you do not have your own. Some type of parish identification badge should be worn by each usher. There will need to be a sufficient number of ushers to carry out the following duties: greeters at each entry point of the church; attendants inside to direct traffic flow into the church, to their assigned seats, Communion, and exiting the church; attendant by washrooms, and disinfecting the church after each Mass and watching over the collection baskets. Once Mass begins, ushers are to remain at the entry and exit points.

Weather permitting, church doors should be propped open to avoid contact with door handles.

The following questions must be asked of each parishioner:

1. Have you taken your temperature?
2. Are you suffering form a cough or exhibiting any other symptoms?
3. Have you been in contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms?
4. Have you travelled in the last 14 days?

5. If their temp has not been taken or they answer Yes to the above 3 questions they cannot be admitted to the church
6. Name and Contact information should be recorded
7. Direct parishioners to hand sanitization station and provide mask where necessary

Once the maximum seating capacity is reached, no one else may be admitted into the church. If you are using more than one door for entry and maximum capacity is reached, this must be communicated to ushers at each entrance. Maximum capacity must include the number of volunteers present (ushers and liturgical ministers) as well as clergy.

Ushers in the Church

1. Liturgical ministers should identify themselves and be escorted to their appropriate seating.
2. Each parishioner must be escorted to their seat, and seated from the front of the church to the back of the church. Parishioners should not proceed to their seat without the direction of an usher.
3. Persons with disabilities should be in the designated handicap seating with the required two-meter distance.
4. Ushers will monitor parishioners during Mass. If anyone is showing signs of distress, ushers will go forward to assist them.
5. If a parishioner needs serious medical aid, ushers are to call 911.
6. For the reception of Communion, Ushers will direct one row at a time to process forward, ensuring social distancing is maintained.
7. Ushers should be in place to direct flow back to the pews after reception is complete.
8. Once Mass is complete, exiting will take place by row, starting from the back to the front, depending on number of exits.
9. Ushers should be stationed in proximity to the exit point for the offertory collection, with a basket placed on a table near the door.

Washroom Attendant(s)

An attendant needs to be available in close proximity to the washroom at all times. Washrooms should be used for emergencies only and appropriate signage should be placed on the doors. After each use, washrooms must be sanitized, including the wiping of door handles, light switches, toilets, and sink areas. Hand sanitizer should be available for use and wipes available in each washroom.

Disinfecting the Church after Mass

Once all parishioners have exited the church, all doors should be locked for cleaning. The following cleaning will be necessary:

1. All pews where people have been seated must be cleaned with an approved cleaner and cleaning technique
2. The front, back, and seats of all pews and kneelers must be wiped.
3. The cleanser should be sprayed onto the cloth to wipe the pews
4. Clothes are to be laundered after each use.
5. Floors should be washed and carpets should be vacuumed.
6. Entry and exit points must be cleaned, as well as high traffic areas, and door knobs, push bars, etc.
7. Surfaces in the Sanctuary that are used must also be sanitized (microphone, ambo, lectern, etc.)
8. Washrooms cleaned as necessary before the next Mass.
9. Masks and gloves used during cleaning are to be disposed of in the garbage.

The church remains closed until the next team of ushers arrives, and sufficient ushers are in place to carry out all duties outlined above

Liturgical Ministers

All prescreening mentioned above for volunteers must be adhered to. If prescreening at home results in not being able to fulfill your duty, the volunteer must contact the coordinator of their ministry or another designated contact person.

Lectors

1. One lector will be scheduled per Mass
2. If no volunteer is available, the lay ecclesial minister will do the readings, or a deacon or priest if absolutely necessary.
3. Lectors are to arrive 20 minutes before Mass to go through the screening process at the entrance with the ushers.
4. A mask must be worn.
5. The lector is to sit in a designated pew close to the ambo (lectern).
6. The lector is to maintain the use of the mask at the ambo if able to remain audible. Otherwise, the lector may remove one side of their mask.
7. At the conclusion of the reading, the lector is to remove the lectionary in the usual manner.
8. Prayers of the Faithful will be read by the deacon or a priest.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHC)

The numbers of EMHCs will depend on the design and layout of the church. Training on the distribution of Holy Communion and placement of Communion stations is to be provided by the priest, deacon, or lay ecclesial minister.

1. EMHCs must arrive 20 minutes before Mass to go through the screening process at the entrance with the ushers.
2. Prior to distribution, hands must be sanitized in the sanctuary, and a mask is to be worn.
3. The dialogue between the minister and communicant occurs at a two-meter/six-foot physical distance. The communicant approaches the minister and the minister carefully places the Body of Christ in the communicant's hand without touching the person.
4. If you have touched the person's hand, you must sanitize before the next communicant approaches.
5. Communion is only to be distributed in the hand.
6. At the conclusion of Communion, all Ciboria are to be placed back on the altar or credence table in the usual manner.
7. Hands must be thoroughly sanitized once distribution is complete, then EMHCs are to return to their seat.

Altar Servers

It is safer during this stage to limit the ministers in the sanctuary to only the priest and deacon and a single server. An altar server may participate in a manner deemed necessary by the presider. The procession may include a server with the processional cross, but only a deacon and priest are to follow. There is no procession with candles for the Gospel. Servers must not hold the book for the prayers. The use of a mask and gloves, and maintaining social distancing must be strictly adhered to.

Musicians(s)

If musicians are serving, the same principles above must be adhered to. Instruments, music stands, and other items used by musicians must be sanitized following Mass by the musicians.



Appendix III

Preparing Churches in Advance of the Official Opening

Please note, pastors of Families of Parishes and Parish Clusters may choose to open one or more sites in their Family at their discretion.

1. Pews and Floor Plan

Due to the need for social distancing and capacity restrictions, you should prepare a floor plan of your church, indicating every pew.

- a. Every third pew should be measured and divided into 24" seating spaces, beginning at the third pew. This allows for a 24"-allowance per person, and makes it much easier to determine the two-metre/six-foot distancing between parishioners of different households. Starting at the third pew allows sufficient space for the Communion Procession.
- b. These seating spaces should be marked in some way, possibly by the use of removable "painter's tape". This tape does not affect wood finishes.
- c. On the floor plan of your church, indicate the available seating spaces and those spaces that are blocked by such things as pillars (see example on page two). Utilize only every third pew in order to maintain social distancing.
- d. Every available seat should be identified in some fashion. The attached floor plan identifies the pews alphabetically and the individual places numerically, as an example.
- e. Your floor plan would then be ready for the assigning of seats for Mass when people arrive at the door.

2. Items to be Removed from Churches and Stored

- a. Hymn books
- b. Sunday Missals or weekday missalettes
- c. Brochures and other materials
- d. Any extra tables and chairs that are not needed
- e. Devotional or votive candles

3. Other Areas

- a. All Holy Water fonts must be emptied - If people want Holy Water for home, they must bring their own container of water to be blessed.
- b. The choir loft or choir area, should not be used except for the musician and cantor. Other members of the choir may join them if distancing of 3m/10ft can be respected.
- c. Any basements or meeting rooms adjacent to your worship space should be off limits during Masses.
- d. You should designate which washrooms will be available for use. They should be clearly identified and everyone entering the church should be informed of this.
- e. In the aisles, the floor should be marked to indicate 6ft distancing, to give sufficient space as people enter and exit, and for the Communion Procession.
- f. During this time of reopening, crying rooms, small chapels, and devotional areas must be closed unless proper distancing can be observed and monitored.
- g. If your church has an area where parishioners normally stand during Mass, this area must not be used.