

**Diocese of Covington & St. Paul Parish**  
**Protocols for Celebrating the Liturgy amid Covid19**

**Updated: 11 June 2020**

We are happy to reopen the doors for in-person worship. There have been some necessary changes to procedures. **Please remember that all the faithful of the Diocese of Covington have dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass and is extended until further notice.** Additionally, those who are sick should refrain from coming to church for fourteen (14) days from when they first began to experience symptoms.

**The Protocols**

1. There is limited seating for every Mass. Please maintain six-feet from others as you wait to enter the church. Since there is limited space, doors will open 30 minutes before Mass. Entrance before that will be prohibited in order to control access to comply with protocols. Entrance will only take place at the front entrance. **Please note: we are no longer taking reservations. Entrance will be on a first come basis.**
2. For Mass
  - 2.1. Public celebrations of the Eucharist (Mass) have resumed. Weekend Masses will be at the 8:15AM and 5PM (Vigil Mass) on Saturday and 8AM, 10AM & 12PM on Sunday. Weekday Masses will be at 8:15AM Monday through Friday.
  - 2.2. Parishioners are to maintain the required social distance of six-feet. Parishioners are to keep the six-feet apart, with an exception made for members of the same household.
  - 2.3. Seating in the churches will be limited to help ensure that this social distancing is maintained. Pews will be blocked off and “seats” marked to ensure six-foot distancing in every direction.
  - 2.4. Families may, if they are living together, sit together. The protocols permit such persons not to observe the six-foot rule.
  - 2.5. Parishioners joining in the public celebration of Mass are recommended to wear facemasks.
  - 2.6. The sacristy behind the sanctuary is to be accessed by clergy only (deacons and priests). No one else is permitted in this sacristy (not emcees, servers, sacristans, nor art and environment committee members or assistants).
  - 2.7. Please know that the pews, ambo, its microphone, door handles, and bathrooms will be sanitized after every Mass. (If you are willing to help with this process, please contact by phone call or text Steve Elmlinger at 859-866-0195, Ruby Hart 859-322-9537 or Barb Jones 859-468-8880.)

**2.8.** Only one person at a time, caretakers/assistants excepted, is allowed in the bathroom.

**2.9.** Water fountains will be turned off and sealed in some manner to prevent their use.

**2.10. At Weekend Masses:**

**2.10.1.** The deacon will proclaim all of the readings.

**2.10.2.** No emcees, servers, sacristans, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, or lectors will be utilized.

**2.10.3.** Ushers are to wear facemasks.

**2.11. At Weekday Masses:**

**2.11.1.** Entrance will be on a first come basis. Please enter at the accessible door at the front of church.

**2.12.** Organist/pianist are to sanitize their instrument after every liturgy.

**2.12.1.** All microphones should also be sanitized after each Mass.

**2.12.2.** A single cantor is permitted in addition to the organist/pianist. They must maintain the six-foot rule.

**2.12.3.** Choirs are not to gather and sing together.

**2.12.4.** The interior front doors are to remain propped open to reduce the touching of door handles.

**2.12.5.** Exterior doors will remain locked to help ensure safety protocols are followed.

**2.12.6.** The holy water fonts and baptismal font will not be used and will remain dry until further notice.

**2.13.** Processions should be avoided to maintain safe, social distancing

**2.13.1.** The sacred ministers will enter the sanctuary from the sacristy.

**2.13.2.** There will be no procession of the gifts, per the reason above.

**2.13.3.** The Sign of Peace will not take place.

**2.13.4.** For the time being, only one person will distribute Holy Communion.

**2.13.5.** Whoever distributes Holy Communion must wear a facemask and sanitize his hands before and after the distribution of Holy Communion.

**2.13.6.** Distribution of the Precious Blood to the faithful will not take place.

**2.13.7.** Communicants are to observe safe, social distancing in the communion procession. Markers in the aisle will be present to facilitate this.

**2.13.8.** The priest and deacon will not be greeting the people for the safety and wellbeing of both clergy and the people.

**2.13.9.** Until further notice, ancillary gatherings connected to Mass are suspended; for example, Children's Liturgy of the Word.

### **3. Sacrament of Reconciliation**

- 3.1.** Regularly scheduled confessions have resumed.
- 3.2.** Lines for the confessional must utilize the markers on the floor to help maintain the six-foot, safe, social distancing.
- 3.3.** Both the penitent and the confessor should wear masks.
- 3.4.** To ensure that the sacrament is celebrated safely, the kneeler in the confessional has been removed and a chair without arms has been placed there.
- 3.5.** A dispenser with hand sanitizer has been located near the door of the confessional. Everyone is to sanitize his or her hands upon entering and exiting the confessional.

### **4. Weddings, Funerals, and Baptisms**

- 4.1.** Beginning on 20 May, 2020, public weddings, funerals, and baptisms are permitted.
- 4.2.** The above guidelines must be followed.