



DIOCESE *of* LACROSSE

Guidelines for the Public Celebration of Masses Updated December 13, 2021

Local ordinances that are more restrictive than the following guidelines should be followed (e.g., regarding face coverings, physical distancing, large gatherings, etc.).

Preparations before Mass:

1. Out of concern and safety for others, anyone with fever or flu-like symptoms should not attend Mass.
2. While there is no policy for seating of those who have been vaccinated and those who have not, each church should designate an area for seating of individuals who desire to observe social distancing. If social distancing can be carried out for the entire church while accommodating the number of those attending Mass, please do so.
3. "Vaccinated-only" Masses are not allowed; checking vaccination status of Mass attendees is also not permitted. However, pastors might consider designating a Mass time for those seeking more stringent precautions.
4. Wearing face coverings and maintaining social distance is highly encouraged.
5. Hand sanitizer should be available for those who wish to use it.
6. Holy water fonts may be filled at the discretion of the pastor.
7. It is permitted to have Eucharistic ministers, altar servers, greeters, ushers, and other volunteers to assist at the Mass, as necessary. Ministers should practice proper social distancing and safety procedures.
8. A cantor, accompanist, and choir are allowed.
9. Sacristans and those who prepare communion elements must carefully wash their hands prior to touching the breads and pouring the wine.
10. All vessels containing bread and wine are to remain covered until the distribution of Holy Communion (except from the epiclesis to after the consecration during Eucharistic Prayer).

11. Separate chalices should be used for the celebrant, each concelebrant, and deacon, or the practice of intinction should be observed for clergy.
12. All liturgical ministers must wash/sanitize their hands before and after Mass.

During Mass:

13. Ministers may process through the body of the church at the beginning and end of Mass.
14. Presentation of gifts is allowed. Hand sanitizer should be made available for use by those presenting the gifts.
15. The exchange of a Sign of Peace may be reintroduced at the discretion of the pastor.
16. All communion ministers must sanitize their hands before the distribution of holy communion.
17. Masks are to be worn for the distribution of Holy Communion by all priests, deacons, and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. This includes visits to the sick and homebound and applies even to those who have been vaccinated.
18. Communion will continue to be given to the faithful under the form of bread alone. Communion is encouraged to be received in the hand.

After Mass:

19. Frequently touched surfaces in the church (pews/pew tops, door handles, microphones, etc.) should be cleaned and/or sanitized per CDC recommendations. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>
20. Other gatherings associated with Mass (e.g., coffee & donuts, funeral luncheons) can be held following current safety precautions.