

Diocese of Covington – St. John the Evangelist Parish
Protocols for Celebrating the Liturgy amid Covid19 – 18 May 2020
Please note these protocols are subject to change at any point

I. Dispensation

1. The dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass for all the faithful of the Diocese of Covington 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.
2. Anyone who has any health issues should NOT come to public Mass.

II. Public Mass

1. Beginning 20 May, 2020, public celebration of the Mass will resume.
 - ◆ The first weekend Mass will be 23/24 May, 2020.
2. At this time, no additional Masses are to be added.
3. The following precautions are to be observed:

Pre Mass

- a. Parishioners are encouraged to wear face coverings.
- b. Parishioners are to maintain a six foot minimum separation at all times with anyone outside of members on own household.
 - ◆ Seating in the churches will be limited to allow for proper distancing.
 - ◆ Every other pew will be blocked off to ensure safe distance.
 - ◆ **No more than four (4) people in a pew unless of same household.**
 - ◆ Seating capacity for St. John is limited to approx. 85 people. Parishioners should be informed of the new restrictions to limit the number of people.
- c. Center doors into main church will NOT be used – use only side doors.
- d. Pews, ambos, door handles, railings (indoor and outdoor), and bathrooms are to be wiped down after every Mass – procedure to be determined.
- e. **Volunteers needed to help with this procedure.**
- f. Everything is to be removed from the pews including all worship aids.
 - ◆ If disposable worship aid is used – it MUST NOT be left in pew.
- g. Ministers:
 - ◆ Only one lector for each Mass (will read responsorial psalm).
 - ◆ No servers will be utilized to minimize risk and hassle.
 - ◆ No sacristans to reduce exposure; priest and/or deacon will set up,
 - ◆ Ushers/Greeters are to wear face coverings.
- h. Music / Musicians
 - ◆ Singing during Mass creates a higher risk of spreading infectious particles.

- There will be no singing by congregation at any mass.
- ◆ Instrumental music may be used for Sunday liturgies
- ◆ If used, musicians must sanitize all equipment after every Mass.
 - this includes microphone, seat, instrument, etc.
- ◆ A single cantor is permitted in addition to organist/pianist – NO CHOIRS.
- i. Volunteers to hold doors or prop open for parishioners as they enter the church to reduce the touching of door handles.
- j. Holy water fonts are not to be used.

During Mass

- k. No processions – clergy will enter and exit via sacristy like daily Mass.
- l. Ushers should wipe handles of collection baskets after use –
 - only two ushers to be used.
- m. No offertory procession – gifts will not be brought forward.
- n. Collection can be brought up by one usher and set on stand by baptism font.
- o. Holy Communion
 - ◆ Only the priest and either deacon or one Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may distribute Holy Communion.
 - All who distribute Holy Communion must wear face masks and sanitize their hands before and after distribution.
 - ◆ No distribution of the Precious Blood.
 - Note: deacon to use separate cup for Precious Blood.
 - ◆ **Exit pews by side aisles and return by center**
 - ◆ Maintain proper distance when going to and returning from Communion.
 - ◆ Communion is to be received in the hand and standing.
 - Only exception is if a person is holding a child or walking aid.
 - ◆ If person receives on tongue, the person distributing Holy Communion **must sanitize their hands** *after each* individual communicant.

After Mass

- p. Volunteers to hold or prop exit doors open to reduce touching of handles.
- q. The priest and deacon will not greet the people after Mass.
 - ◆ but will be holding each of you close to their hearts :)
- r. Exit strategy like communion in reverse – leave by side – no center aisle.
 - ◆ Do not exit pew until all people from pew behind have exited pew.
- s. Only use side doors to leave main body of church.
- t. No stopping – go straight to parking lot

Until further notice, no gatherings after mass for any reason.

III. Weddings, Funerals, Baptism, First Communion

1. Public weddings, funerals, and baptisms are permitted.
2. First Communion mass is permitted – may require multiple masses
3. The above guidelines must be followed especially safe distance.

IV. Reception of Catechumens and Candidates Into the Church

1. Pastors should consider a special Mass distinct from the scheduled liturgies to reduce the number of people in church if this is a potential issue.
2. All above guidelines must be followed.

V. Sacrament of Reconciliation

1. Regularly scheduled confessions can resume (45 minutes prior to start of mass, first Friday 11:00 - noon, third Monday, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.
2. Lines for confessionals should have markers on the ground every six feet to encourage safe, social distancing.
3. Both the penitent and the confessor should wear masks
4. Pastors are to take every possible precaution to ensure that the sacrament is celebrated safely, for example, removing kneelers and offering a chair without arms, offering a means for the penitent to sanitize the kneeler before and after confession, or offering sanitizer for those entering and exiting the confessional.

VI. Anointing of the Sick

1. Priests are to follow current guidelines for Anointing of the Sick.
2. When it is not possible to administer the Sacrament, then what the Apostolic Penitentiary said about the Sacrament of Penance maybe applied to the Sacrament of the Sick: ‘Where the individual faithful find themselves in the painful impossibility of receiving sacramental absolution, it should be remembered that perfect contrition, expressed by a sincere request for forgiveness which the penitent is at present able to express, and accompanied by a firm resolution to attend sacramental confession as soon as possible, obtains forgiveness of sins, even mortal ones.’ (Confer CCC no. 1452)
3. Priests are permitted to use a cotton-swab for the actual anointing.

VII. Other liturgies and devotions are permitted but are required to follow the above guidelines.