



LITURGICAL ADVISORY + June 23, 2021

Wednesday of the 12th Week in Ordinary Time

Catholic Diocese of Saginaw + Office of Liturgy + 5800 Weiss Street + Saginaw, Michigan 48603-2762

Updated COVID-19 Protocols & Guidelines:

Earlier today, Bishop Gruss sent out the following message to all the Priests and Directors of Parish Life:

Because the governor has lifted all COVID restrictions (mask mandate, size of gatherings, etc.), we are now able to open our churches to pre-COVID “normal”, except for offering the Precious Blood to the congregation. This will be the last thing to re-institute at a later time. There still may be some people who may be a bit fearful about re-opening. Of course, we must treat everyone with kindness and love no matter where they might fall on the spectrum regarding this reopening. There will be a more complete Liturgical Advisory regarding protocols and guidelines later this week.

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In light of improving circumstances and this announcement by Bishop Gruss, please allow us to offer you the following pastoral and liturgical advisory:

A: General Considerations.....

Those who are ill, have significant health risk factors or care for someone who is compromised or ill, are not obligated to attend Mass in-person on Sunday and Holy Days as well as those who have significant fear or anxiety of contracting the Coronavirus in a large group of people. These faithful should observe the Lord’s Day and are encouraged to spend time in prayer on Sunday, meditating on the Lord’s passion, death and resurrection. An appropriate way to do this is through viewing a broadcast of Sunday Mass.

NB: *Mass that is broadcast through various media (including livestream), is not intended as an alternative nor does it fulfill the obligation for persons who are able to gather for Sunday or Holy Day celebrations of the Eucharist. Such broadcasts are intended for the sick, homebound, imprisoned, etc. who are unable to attend Mass in person.*

B: Specific Recommendations.....

Above all, Pastors, Parochial Administrators and Directors of Parish Life are encouraged not to hurriedly launch into the restoration of everything that might be considered “normal” (prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic) without a thorough “Restoration Plan” and timeline envisioned by the parish leadership (and, if appropriate, the parish’s Worship Commission and/or Pastoral Council) and communicated to parishioners prior to implementation.

Common sense and to error on the side of caution should be major planning principles for every restoration measure. For instance, you may consider:

- Hand sanitizer should be available at the doors of church
- Discreet use of hand sanitizer by Ordinary (bishops, priests, deacons and instituted acolytes) and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion [EMHC] should continue
- Facial coverings by the Ordinary and EMHC do not have to be worn (unless it is the preference of the one distributing Holy Communion)
- Distribution of the Precious Blood from the chalices to the faithful cannot be restored at this time
- Concelebrating priests must communicate by Intinction
- Deacons may receive the Precious Blood from a separate chalice (rather than from the priest-presider’s chalice)

C: Liturgical Resources.....

You may consider this timeframe of restoration an excellent opportunity to afford the faithful of your parish for some on-going liturgical catechesis regarding the celebration of Sunday and the Eucharist. Please review the attached liturgical resources that have been compiled: (1) from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati (entitled *Together: Welcoming Each Other Back to Mass*); and (2) from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Feel free to use as inserts into your parish bulletin and/or your other means of communication to your parishioners. However, be mindful of the requirements for these copyrighted materials.

In summary, per the Bishop’s announcement, all other restoration of liturgical practices may be considered once you have put together your plan and timeline.

Saint Joseph, pray for us!

