

Practical Guidelines for Reopening

St. Gerard Majella Parish

We are excited to welcome you back to the Parish. We will resume public Masses on the weekend of June 20/21, 2020. There will be two public Masses on the weekend: Saturday at 5:00 pm and Sunday at 11:00 am. The live-streaming Mass will be held at 9:00 am on Sunday morning for those who do not wish to attend the public Mass.

Please take note of the following guidelines in its entirety:

- **The dispensation of the faithful from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains in place** until decreed otherwise by the Bishop. No one is obliged to attend Holy Mass while this dispensation is in effect. Because of this, the live-streaming of Masses will continue for those who are not able to attend the public mass.
- **Attendance to the public masses will be limited.** The maximum capacity of each church is reduced to 30% to ensure physical distancing. At St. Gerard Majella, we will be happy to accommodate 80 persons for each service. AT THIS TIME, WE HAVE ADOPTED A POLICY: '**FIRST COME FIRST SERVE**'.
- **Physical Distancing must be consistently practiced.** Your parish church will have pews/rows that are sectioned off, and that family groups and individuals will be asked to keep at least two meters (six feet) distance from each other.
 - You **must** wear a mask to Mass to guard against germ spread.
 - All attendees are expected to wear non-medical masks and should bring their own masks. If you do not have a mask you will not be able to attend the public Mass.
 - Anyone presenting symptoms of illness or who have travelled out of country in the past 14 days are directed to stay home.
 - Anyone who has even the slightest symptoms or feelings of sickness must remain home.
 - A volunteer at the door will be taking recording your name & phone number so that in the event of an outbreak we will be able to provide local health professionals with contact tracing.
- **General guidelines to ensure safety:**
 - Hand sanitizing stations are to be available by the doors and you will be required to sanitize your hands prior to entering the church.
 - Washrooms will only be used on in an emergency and will be closely monitored by the volunteers.
 - The church will open 30 minutes before the Mass begins and parishioners will be seated in a first come first serve basis.
 - When the church is at 30% capacity or when the mass starts, the doors will be closed, and no further entry will be allowed.

- There will be single distances seats available in the center pews and the families who wish to sit together will be ushered in to the side pews.
 - There will be a designated box at the entrance of the church where you can provide your offertory envelope. If you forget to drop it off upon entering the church, the volunteers will have it accessible for you to drop off at the end the mass as you are exiting the building.
 - There will be no collection during the mass.
 - There is to be no Sign of Peace.
 - There will be no holy water in fonts.
 - The Liturgy of the Word for children during Masses is not permitted.
 - When the Mass has ended you will be guided to the exit by the volunteers. Please follow their instructions and be sure to maintain social distancing.
 - There will be no congregating in the foyer or in the parking lot outside. Please proceed immediately to your vehicles.
- **Liturgical changes will be in place.** Temporary adjustments will be made with respect to how we celebrate Mass and receive Holy Communion. You will be instructed at the public mass and guided by the volunteers.
 - The individual attestation at the moment of distribution of Holy Communion ("The Body of Christ, R: Amen") is eliminated; instead one general pronouncement ("The Body of Christ") will be made by the priest, and one general response ("Amen") is to be made by all congregants together before the distribution begins. Then each person who wishes to receive the Blessed Sacrament comes forward in procession and receives in silence.
 - The priest must wear a mask during the distribution of Holy Communion, as must the communicants.
 - The Precious Blood will not be distributed at this time.
 - Holy Communion may only be received in the hand.
 - In the present circumstances, Communion will not be distributed on the tongue.
 - Physical distancing must be maintained during the Communion procession.
 - There can be only one single file Communion line.
 - Only the celebrant will distribute Communion – he will start on the left of the church – one pew at a time starting at the front maintaining social distancing – do not leave your pew until the pew in front of you has returned – when you return to your pew, please sit down
 - When you arrive for communion, fold one hand over the other to receive the Eucharist – Father will place the Eucharist in your hand, no words are spoken, step aside, remove your mask at the ear (as the lector did) consume the Eucharist, put your mask back on and return to your seat and please sit down.
 - Procedure for Departure:

After the final blessing parishioners must remain in their pews until ushered out by the volunteer. Pews will be dismissed in an orderly fashion, maintaining social distancing starting at the back in the center then to the sides. You will be asked NOT TO LEAVE

ON YOUR OWN. You will be reminded to leave your offertory envelope at the entrance if you forgot to drop it off upon entry.

- **There still will be a risk for anyone who attends a public Mass.** Even with best health practices and strict physical distancing, anyone who enters a public space should recognize there is a risk of contracting the coronavirus. Improved cleaning will occur in our church, but no one should expect that they will be any safer from germs than in other public spaces. Anyone attending Mass does so at their own risk.