

Instructions for the Faithful on the Return to Mass and/or Confessions at St. Michael Parish

**[Please note that these instructions may be continually updated.
Please check the parish website often for any notifications or updates].**

A. Preparations Before coming to Mass/Confessions

- 1) Those who are “high risk” (over the age of 70 or who have serious health conditions) are especially cautioned to avoid public gatherings, including Mass, until it is safe for them to attend. Though we wish that all could gather with us for the Eucharist, we cannot guarantee complete safety at this time.
- 2) Please take the temperature of all household members before coming to the church. For those who are sick or have a temperature of at least 100.4° F (the threshold “symptomatic” temperature for potential coronavirus) should not come to church.
- 3) Those attending Mass/Confessions are asked to maintain hand hygiene. Hand hygiene includes washing their hands prior to coming to church, bringing their own hand sanitizer, sanitizing their hands before and after touching any surface, and avoiding needless touching any surfaces. Hand sanitizers stations have been set up in various locations

B. Arriving at the Church

- 1) Those attending Mass/Confessions are asked to maintain physical distancing before, during, and after Mass. Physical (safe or social) distancing is defined as maintaining at least six feet of separation between others. Members of the same family are not bound by safe distancing.
- 2) Those attending Mass/Confessions are asked to wear a cloth face covering, unless they are under the age of two. We will have a limited supply of masks available for those who do not have their own.
- 3) The Marian Hall doors will be the only doors that people will have access to for both Confessions and Mass. All other doors will be locked until approximately ½ hour before Masses begin (or until the church has been properly sanitized, whichever comes first).
- 4) If you come for Confessions, when you are done, you will be asked to leave the building until such time that the ushers and greeters assigned are ready escort people into the church.
- 5) As you and your family arrive for Mass, stay together and wait in the parking lot until an usher or greeter is ready to escort you into the church building to the available pews.
- 6) If all available pew spaces are taken up before everyone can be seated, then those who are left will be invited to attend a later Mass.

C. Changes during the Mass

- 1) There will be no hymnals or books available of any kind. If you wish, you may bring your own prayer books. Be sure to take them with you when you leave.
- 2) Bulletins will not be available until after Mass is over.
- 3) Holy water will not be available at the entrances of the church.
- 4) You will notice that the entrance and recessional processions will be much shorter.
- 5) The offertory procession will be eliminated during this time. However, ushers will still take up the collection at the normal time.
- 6) The instruction "Let us offer the sign of peace" and subsequent sign of peace is omitted.
- 7) The distribution of Communion will be handled in such a way as to maintain social distancing requirements as best as possible. Instructions will be given prior to the beginning Mass.
- 8) Ushers will be instructed on how to release each pew for the distribution of communion.
- 9) The distribution of the Precious Blood for the faithful will be omitted during this time.
- 10) While receiving communion on the tongue is not prohibited, the current preference is to receive communion on the hand.
- 11) For the reception of communion, when you approach the Priest, Deacon or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion be sure to do the following:
 - a) If you are receiving communion on the tongue, be sure to **remain still, open your mouth wide and push out your tongue** so that the minister will be less likely to touch your tongue in the process.
 - b) When receiving communion in the hand, please **remain still and keep your top hand FLAT, not cupped**, to reduce the chance of physical contact.
 - c) **PLEASE NOTE:** In case that physical contact does occur, the Priests, Deacons and Extraordinary Ministers will be trained on the proper steps to take to re-sanitize their hands before continuing the distribution of communion.
- 12) When Mass is over, you will be released by the ushers or greeters to the nearest exit to maintain proper social distancing.
- 13) Please do not leave any items in your pews. Help us keep things clean.

D. Other Items

- 1) Once Mass is over, you will be asked not to congregate in Marian Hall, but to depart immediately to your vehicles while maintaining safe distancing practices.
- 2) Volunteers who have been trained in the proper method of sanitizing the church will be on hand between Masses to complete this task. No one should be staying in the church too long so that sanitizing process may begin as soon as the church cleared to prepare for the next Mass.
- 3) While we will have a custodial person available between Masses on Sunday to keep the Restrooms clean, we ask your cooperation in limiting the use of these facilities.
- 4) As stated before, no one will be allowed in the church until after the sanitizing is completed and the ushers and greeters are ready escort people to the pews.