



St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church

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May 18, 2020

Dear Parishioners,

Bishop David Konderla issued a Timeline and Procedures for Resumption of Public Mass and Sacramental Life based upon the advice of local medical authorities, including a leading infectious disease specialist, a joint task force consisting of clergy and laity of both Dioceses in Oklahoma and members of the Presbyteral Council of each Diocese. These have been adapted to our Parish.

This pandemic is new territory for the world and our Parish. Given that reality, our procedures here at St. Francis de Sales will be changed and updated as needed. I ask for your prayers and patience.

I cannot overstate the importance of some necessary procedures that is social distancing, coupled with practicing good hygiene: washing hands often with warm water and soap (as you say the Lord's prayer), using hand sanitizer and masks. The use of masks is for the good of your fellow parishioner. You can have and spread COVID-19 **BEFORE YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS**. It is a sign of the love and care of Christ to wear a mask. **Masks will be mandatory for all ministers at Mass.**

Each person over three years of age is strongly encouraged to wear a mask. Patience and a spirit of charity toward ourselves and our neighbors, particularly the vulnerable, will greatly assist in a well ordered transition back to public Mass.

1. Timeline for the resumption of public Mass and sacramental life in accord with the Bishops procedures:

- a. Public Masses and other liturgies may resume the week of May 18. All public Masses and sacraments will take place in our Parish Hall. I will celebrate daily Mass in the Parish Hall starting on Thursday at 7:00 a.m. in English and Friday at 8:30 a.m. in English.
- b. Public Sunday Mass may resume on May 23/24, 2020; we will have a **special Sunday Vigil Mass for those persons 60 years of age and over** in English at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday at 3:00 p.m. in Spanish.

We will continue our regular Weekend schedule. English Masses on Saturday at 6:00 p.m. and Sunday at 9:30 a.m. Spanish Masses at 12:00 noon and 6:00 p.m. on Sunday.

2. The obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains suspended for all Catholics.

- a. Persons with health vulnerabilities of any age are **strongly encouraged** not to participate in public Mass.

- b. Persons who are sick or feel sick must not attend public Mass.
 - i. People with COVID-19 reported wide ranging symptoms from mild to severe. These symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. They include fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, and new loss of taste or smell.
 - ii. Persons are encouraged to take their temperature before leaving home to attend Mass and not attend public Mass if their temperature is 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above. You will be asked at the entrance if you wish to have your temperature checked. If you did not check it at home that day, please allow us to do so with a non touch thermometer.
- c. **Seating will be limited to 30 to 40 persons per Mass.**
- d. I will continue to use Facebook Live to share my homilies. I encourage those that are not present for Mass to pray the Mass on the Web.

3. Requirements for the resumption of public Mass and sacramental life

- a. Preparation for Mass
 - i. The Parish Hall will be set up with the chairs spaced for safety. Household groups may sit together. If you need additional chairs for your family, please ask the Usher to assist you. **Six feet must be allowed between Household groups or individuals.**
 - ii. Volunteers will sanitize chairs before each Mass.
 - iii. **Those attending Mass are strongly encouraged to bring their masks;** we will have a limited supply of masks available if you need one. For the health of your neighbors and your Pastor, please wear a mask at Mass.
 - iv. **Those attending Mass are encouraged to bring their own sanitizer wipes in a Ziploc type bag.**
 - v. Our Parish will provide hand sanitizer at the entrance of the Hall, and all are encouraged to use it. Parents, please help your children sanitize their hands as you are entering.
 - vi. Worship aids will be distributed digitally for cell phones, and spoken Mass parts will also be projected on the wall to help you fully participate.
 - vii. Doors will be locked open before Mass so that people do not need to touch doors as they enter or exit.
 - viii. Those who have frequent and close contact with others (e.g., health care workers, hairdressers, food service employees), should follow these guidelines to the extreme to remain physically distant from other members of the parish faith community.

- ix. If you wish to have Holy Water at home, please bring your own container to Mass with water already in it, and Fr. Steve will gladly bless it for you.

b. Entering Church

- i. Fr. Steve will need help. All ministers at each Mass (Ushers, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, servers, projector tech) and other volunteers are asked to arrive early to help clean the church before each Mass and assist in handing out PPE and taking the temperature of parishioners as requested.
- ii. All worshipers attend Mass need to sanitize their hands as they enter, maintain 6 feet of social distance between households as best as possible, and are strongly encouraged to wear a Mask. There will be a station (outside in good weather/inside with bad weather) available for a non touch temperature check and for receiving masks and gloves.
- iii. Parishioners who have coughs and sneezes associated with allergies are required to wear a mask or not attend Mass out of charity for others.
- iv. Parishioners may use their own wipes or spray to disinfect their chairs upon entering. Please have enough sanitizer to also sanitize your chair(s) at the end of Mass before you leave.
- v. Ushers
 1. Ushers must wear masks, protective gloves and have their temperature checked.
 2. Ushers will ensure that individuals/households maintain social distance as they enter the Parish Hall, go to Communion, and leave the Parish Hall.
 3. Households may ask the Ushers for additional chairs so they may sit together within the designated spaces.
- vi. Moving **within six feet** of other households (families/individuals) to visit before, during, or after Mass is prohibited.

c. Mass

- i. Congregational participation is required.
 1. Sing is allowed.
 2. Fr. Steve encourages you to prayerfully read the Scriptures before coming to Mass (Families with young children I encourage you to read them to your children during the week and minimally as you drive to church).
 3. Fr. Steve will send out by Flocknote, a link to a Microsoft Word file and PDF file for each Sunday.
 4. Projection of the Readings and Mass parts will be available at each Mass in which we have a trained volunteer to run it. That person just needs a little tech knowledge. YOU could be that volunteer.
- ii. Choirs should maintain social distancing, which may mean decreasing the members in the choir at any given Mass.

- iii. One Server per Mass is needed, but they will not wear a Church robe. The Server will ring the bells at the Consecration time. You will sit with your family.
- iv. One Lector per Mass. They will be given the Scriptures on a onetime use source, or simply proclaim using their personal phone.
- v. The gifts will be placed at the Altar by the priest before Mass. No gift processions at this time.
- vi. No collection will be taken during Mass. The baskets for the Collection will be placed at the Parish Hall entrance for your needed monetary offerings.
 1. Online giving is possible on our church website and the Diocesan website;
 - <http://www.stfrancisidabel.org/>
 - <https://dioceseoftulsa.org/donate> to support a specific parish?paymentOrgID=9042
- vii. During the Eucharistic Prayer all who are able will stand until after the Memorial Acclamation, then all will sit until after the Great "Amen." This is our common posture during the Eucharistic prayer. This will be a temporary measure during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- viii. Holding hands during the Lord's Prayer has not ever been an official part of the Mass. If holding hands is a household tradition for you, you may do so, but holding hands with non household members is strictly prohibited.
- ix. The sign of peace between parishioners is omitted. The Mass will continue with the Lamb of God.
- x. An Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist (Communion Minister) is not needed unless Fr. Steve or priest present wishes to absent himself from close contact.
- xi. Communion
 1. Fr. Steve or a Communion Minister will bring Holy Communion to you as you stand at your seat. If you are not receiving Communion at Mass, you may be seated during Holy Communion.
 2. The Eucharist will be received in the form of the Body of Christ only during this time.
 3. Communicants are strongly encouraged to receive the Eucharist in the hand. Jesus said, "Take and eat," so receiving Holy Communion in the hand is a very proper way to fulfill the Lord's command. To do this during the time of pandemic is an act of charity toward the minister of Communion, and all present.
 4. Those Communicants receiving in the hand will remain standing after we all say, "Lord, I am not worthy that you ... and my soul shall be healed." Fr. Steve or Communion Minister will come to all those standing and share the Body of Christ.
 5. After placing the host on your hand, wait till Fr. Steve or the Communion Minister moves to the next person to consume the Body of Christ. Those parishioners kind enough to wear a mask will leave their mask on until Fr. Steve or the Communion Minister moves on, then with one hand, remove one side or the top of the mask, and with the other place the Body of Christ in your mouth, then place the mask back on as you sit down in your chair.

6. If you must receive on the tongue, you will remain seated until after all receiving in the hand have done so. Then, one at a time, you will come up to the Altar to receive Holy Communion. The next person receiving on the tongue **WILL NOT COME OUT OF THEIR SEAT UNTIL THE PERSON BEFORE THEM HAS RETURNED ALL THE WAY TO THEIR SEAT.** As the persons are moving, Fr. Steve will need to sanitize his hands thoroughly between each person. Again, you are strongly encouraged to receive in the hand. **This procedure will be temporary** during this time of COVID 19; compliance with these instructions is an act of charity toward your priest and fellow parishioners.
7. Fr. Steve and all other Communion ministers must sanitize their hands in public view immediately before and after distribution of the Holy Communion.

xii. Exiting Mass

1. Doors will be propped open at the end of Mass so that persons exiting do not need to touch the doors as they leave.
2. Parishioners are asked to use wipes to disinfect their chairs upon leaving at the end of Mass. If you did not bring wipes, the Parish does have a limited supply. You may ask the Usher for wipes.
3. **Ushers will dismiss parishioners by row /household unit to ensure a staggered exit of persons attending Mass.**
4. Parishioners will maintain social distancing (six feet) from other individuals/household units while exiting. Please move directly to your car.

d. Miscellaneous

- i. Restrooms will remain open with both soap and hand sanitizer.
- ii. Much to Fr. Steve's sadness, there will be no coffee, donuts, pancake breakfasts, or other social gatherings.
- iii. There will be no receptions on church property during this time.

4. Opportunities to Attend Mass

- a. Patience and charity toward our neighbor will be the prime virtues as we resume public Mass. Given the need to maintain social distance, we will limit attendance to thirty three (33) percent occupancy as we keep six feet between households.
- b. You are encouraged to attend daily Mass, which will also be held in the Parish Hall to allow for Social Distancing and proper sanitation.

Peace,

