



REVEREND DANIEL B. CARSON

VICAR GENERAL AND MODERATOR OF THE CURIA

Dear Brother Priest,

I write today to provide you updates. I will continue to keep you informed as we navigate this challenging time.

Updated Covid-19 Liturgical Guidelines

While we all continue following the requirements of the local jurisdictions with regard to the number of people that are allowed to attend Liturgical Celebrations, I want to thank you all for all that you are doing for the Faithful of this Archdiocese.

We have reviewed the guidelines in the *Public Celebration of Mass and Holy Communion Outside of Mass* document that was distributed in May 2020 and made some revisions to that document. The English version of the revised document is [here](#); the Spanish version of the document is [here](#).

For ease of reference, the areas that have been revised are listed in detail below:

The following revisions modify the “Public Celebration of Mass and Holy Communion Outside of Mass” guidelines issued May 14, 2020. Guidelines not included in the revisions below remain in force, in particular the continuing dispensation of the obligation to attend Mass on Sunday.

Health and Hygiene Considerations:

- Previous Guideline (pg. 4): “All liturgical celebrations should observe limitations on gathering sizes and ensure social distancing. These limitations are being set by each jurisdiction and will be communicated in future communication when a timeline to resume public Masses is in place. Members of the same household may sit together, but there should be at least 6 feet of separation otherwise. Gatherings before and after celebrations are prohibited, including ministers greeting the faithful before and after Mass.”
- Revised Guideline: *All liturgical celebrations should observe limitations on gathering sizes and ensure social distancing. These limitations are still being set by each jurisdiction and we will continue to communicate any updates as jurisdictions move into future reopening phases. Members of the same household may sit together, but there should be at least 6 feet of separation otherwise. Ministers may greet members of the assembly as they arrive and/or depart from the church. However, wearing masks and physical distancing must be observed and congregating outside of the church building should not be encouraged.*

October 22, 2020 3:39 pm

Preparation of Ministers:

- Previous Guideline (pg. 6): “For the most part, the use of lay ministers in the sanctuary—readers, altar servers, sacristans, and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion—should be severely curtailed or omitted altogether. Exceptions can be made to assist priests who may themselves be vulnerable.”
- Revised Guideline: *Care should be taken in utilizing lay ministers (readers, altar servers, sacristans and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion) in the sanctuary to ensure proper social distancing throughout Mass. Altar servers may be employed with the permission of their parents, and must wear masks at all times. Please be understanding if a lay minister is not yet comfortable to serve.*
- Previous Guideline (pg. 6): “The use of choirs should be omitted. The preferred musical accompaniment at Mass consists of one cantor and one organist or pianist. Consideration may also be given to omitting congregational singing altogether in order to minimize particle spread.”
- Revised Guideline: *Musical accompaniment at Mass may employ a cantor and organist or pianist. Small musical ensembles, e.g. trios or quartets are also permitted. However, the decision on whether to use a small ensemble must factor in the need for enhanced social distancing (greater than 6 feet) from each other and as separate as possible from the congregation. The decision on whether to use a choir loft should take into account the size of the nave and its relationship to the loft. If the ensemble and/or cantor is located in front of the congregation, enhanced social distancing must be observed and/or the use of plastic barriers. Hymns and sung Mass parts by a cantor or small ensemble is allowed, but singing by the congregation remains prohibited.*

Preparation of the Church:

- Previous Guideline (pg. 7): “Routes of liturgical processions should maintain social distancing between ministers and members of the assembly.”
- Revised Guideline: *Routes of liturgical processions that are not socially distanced from the congregation are allowed, provided the amount of time when social distancing does not occur is minimal. For example, entrance/recessional processions down a center aisle are allowed even if they briefly come close to the congregation.*

Communion Rite:

- Previous Guideline (pg. 11): “In order to minimize the number of ministers exposed to individual contact, only ordinary ministers of Communion are to distribute Communion at the present. If the ordinary minister, even if he is the principal celebrant, is vulnerable to infection and no other ordinary minister is able to assist, then he may ask an extraordinary minister to distribute Communion. The practice of self-communication (i.e., a communicant taking a host from the ciborium instead of receiving from a minister) remains prohibited.”
- Revised Guideline: *Use of Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to distribute Holy Communion is permitted without reservation. Like ordinary ministers, extraordinary ministers must wear a mask and must sanitize their hands before*

distributing Communion. The practice of self-communication (i.e., a communicant taking a host from the ciborium instead of receiving from a minister) remains prohibited.

College of Consultors Meetings

Linked **here** is a listing of the dates of the upcoming College of Consultors meetings with the deadlines for submitting materials for each of the meetings.

Remind the Faithful of Information on the Website

The archdiocesan website in response to the coronavirus is updated regularly with information, in English and Spanish, for you and the Faithful available at adw.org/coronavirus, which includes a link to find a listing of live stream Masses and prayers available at adw.org/live-streamed-masses-and-prayers/. The *Catholic Standard* and the Spanish-language *El Pregonero* newspapers are currently available on-line at cathstan.org and elpreg.org.

As always, should you have questions or need assistance from my office and the Pastoral Center, please let us know. Please be assured of my prayers for you.

With gratitude for your priestly ministry, I am
Sincerely in Christ,
Reverend Daniel B. Carson
Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia