



## 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.

### **Review of Current Restrictions by Jurisdiction**

Various jurisdictions have modified their COVID-19 restrictions and quarantine regulations. The following outlines these changes and current requirements.

#### Maximum Mass Capacity:

District of Columbia: There is **no** change at this time. Religious facilities are still limited in both indoor and outdoor settings to the lesser of 50 percent capacity of the facility/space or 100 persons. Social distancing is required, and face coverings are required indoors (and outdoors if distancing is not possible) subject to certain exceptions.

Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's Counties: These jurisdictions continue to follow the **State of Maryland** limit of 75% capacity, with face coverings required indoors (and outdoors if distancing is not possible) subject to certain exceptions. Social distancing is "strongly recommended," but not mandated.

Prince George's County: Effective starting Sunday, November 15 at 5:00 p.m., Prince George's County will **reduce** the capacity for services held at places of worship from 50% to 25% for indoor worship services and 125 persons for outdoor services while maintaining social distancing.

Montgomery County: Effective as of Tuesday, November 10, Montgomery County has **reduced** the maximum Mass capacity from 40% to 25%. Religious facilities are now limited to four persons per 200 sq. ft. up to a maximum of 25% capacity, with outdoor services limited to 150 persons absent a county letter of approval. Social distancing is required, and face coverings are required indoors (and outdoors if distancing is not possible) subject to certain exceptions. Leaders at Mass (Priests, Deacons, Eucharistic ministers, ushers, musician(s), cantor(s)) must be screened for symptoms, temperature and if they have had contact with positive case prior to the first service of the day.

#### Capacity for All Other Events Held at Religious Facilities:

All of Maryland Unless Otherwise Specified by County (Applicable to Calvert, Charles and Saint Mary's Counties): According to Maryland Department of Health's updated guidance issued on Tuesday, November 10, all Marylanders should refrain from attending public and private indoor gatherings of more than 25 individuals in one

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location and should practice physical distancing to the extent possible. This does not include Mass or other religious ceremonies. We do not interpret this limitation to apply to Catholic schools or Religious Education classes. However, individual class sizes should be limited to 25 persons and appropriate social distancing should be implemented.

Montgomery County: Montgomery County has separately ordered that gatherings of more than 25 people are prohibited at all locations and venues. This does not include Mass or other religious ceremonies. Religious education and Catholic schools should not have more than 25 individuals in one classroom and should practice appropriate social distancing.

Prince George's County: Prince George's County has also separately ordered that as of Sunday, November 15 at 5:00 p.m., indoor gatherings of more than 10 are prohibited and outdoor gatherings of more than 25 are prohibited. **This does not include Mass or other religious ceremonies.**

District of Columbia: Religious facilities are limited in both indoor and outdoor settings to the lesser of 50 percent capacity of the facility/space and/or 100 persons. Social distancing is required, and face coverings are required indoors (and outdoors if distancing is not possible) subject to certain exceptions.

Should you have questions, please the Office of the General Counsel at [Legaladmin@adw.org](mailto:Legaladmin@adw.org)

### **Current COVID-19 Quarantine Regulations:**

On Tuesday, November 10, the **Maryland Department of Health** issued the following guidance:

All Marylanders should refrain from non-essential travel outside of Maryland. In addition, the Maryland Department of Health strongly recommends:

- Any Marylander returning from out-of-state or any out-of-state traveler should either get tested for COVID-19 promptly upon arrival in Maryland or within 72 hours before travel to Maryland. A list of test sites can be found **here**.
- Out-of-state visitors should be tested within 72 hours prior to arrival and to cancel travel if they receive a positive result. Visitors waiting for their test results should stay at home between the time of their test and their arrival in Maryland or to self-quarantine upon arrival.
- Any Marylander who travels to a state with a COVID-19 test positivity rate above 10% or with a case rate over 20 per 100,000 in the past 7 days should get tested and self-quarantine at home until the test result is received.
- A list of state COVID-19 test positivity rates can be found **here**
- A list of state COVID-19 case rate per 100,000 over the past 7 days can be found **here**
- The District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the States of Delaware and West Virginia are exempt from these recommendations.

- On Monday, November 9, D.C. Mayor Bowser issued the following [order](#):
- People who are visiting D.C. need to get tested within 72 hours of traveling to the District.
- If visiting for more than 3-5 days, visitors must get tested within 3-5 days of arrival.
- D.C. residents returning to the District after traveling to any place other than Maryland, Virginia, or a low-risk state or country must either:
  - Limit daily activities and self-monitor for 14 days up their return
  - Limit daily activities until they are tested for COVID-19 (within 3-5 days after their return) and receive a negative result.

Should you have questions, please the Office of the General Counsel at [Legaladmin@adw.org](mailto:Legaladmin@adw.org)

### **Resource - *Keeping the Lord's House Open to All***

In light of the increase in local Covid-19 cases, it is important to make sure that every member of your parish community is aware of their role in limiting the spread of the virus. The bilingual resource, linked [here](#), outlines the rights and responsibilities of the entire parish community – staff, volunteers and parishioners - to ensure everyone is safe while participating in in-person ministry. This is not a waiver and does not require signatures. Rather, it is a communication tool articulating expectations for everyone returning to parish events. Please share this resource with staff and volunteers, and share with parishioners as you determine is best.

If you have questions please contact the Office of Pastoral Ministry and Social Concerns at [Pmsc@adw.org](mailto:Pmsc@adw.org).

### **Personal Travel during COVID-19 pandemic**

The CDC continues to advise about the risks associated with travelling during COVID-19 pandemic. However, with the holidays fast approaching, many employees are considering their travel plans outside of the DC, Maryland, and Virginia area. Employees who plan to travel should review the applicable requirements in DC and/or Maryland before departing and make arrangements to ensure that they comply with any applicable testing or isolation requirements upon their return for in-person work. Currently, both DC and Maryland have issued travel advisories for travel to high risk states. Maryland currently uses the CDC guidance for [high risk states](#) (COVID19 positivity rate of 10% or higher) and the parameters as described by Governor Hogan on November 9, 2020 linked [here](#), while DC publishes its current list at <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/phasetwo>.

Employees should speak to their supervisor well in advance about their travel plans and discuss whether the employee can work virtually upon their return, if necessary. If an employee does not obtain prior permission to work remotely (or if a position is unable to be performed remotely), the employee may be required to use accrued leave to cover their absence from work.

As always, please remember to follow the CDC-recommended COVID-19 practices: washing hands, staying home if sick, wearing cloth masks, practicing social distancing, and avoiding large groups of people.

If you have any questions, please Human Resources at [ArchdioceseHR@adw.org](mailto:ArchdioceseHR@adw.org).

## **Youth Rally and Mass for Life – January 29, 2021**

With the uncertainty caused by COVID-19 across the country, the Archdiocese of Washington is transitioning the 2021 Rally and Mass for Life to a virtual event. There will not be an in-person event in 2021 at Capital One Arena.

The Youth Rally and Mass for Life will be Friday, January 29, 2021. The Virtual Rally will be from 8:30-10:00 a.m. and the Mass for Life will be livestreamed from the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle from 10:00-11:00 a.m. Our goal for the 2021 Virtual Rally and Mass for Life is to engage youth in their communities, to inspire them to advocate for life from conception to natural death, and to request your help with this mission. We hope that our virtual event will foster even stronger collaboration and participation from diocesan groups across the country.

Due to current and the possibility of increased restrictions in DC and Maryland, we are recommending that parishes do not host outside groups this year for the March for Life. At this time, it is not advisable to schedule overnight events. If you still would like to consider hosting an outside group, I ask you to please contact my office to discuss the feasibility of doing so safely in our current environment.

If you have any questions about the Youth Rally and Mass for Life please contact Tex Phelps at [phelpst@adw.org](mailto:phelpst@adw.org). If you are considering hosting an outside group, please email Terry Farrell at [farrellt@adw.org](mailto:farrellt@adw.org).

## **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](http://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/](http://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](http://cathstan.org) and [elpreg.org](http://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