



Archdiocese of Los Angeles

Office for
Worship

3424
Wilshire
Boulevard

Los Angeles
California
90010-2241

GUIDELINES ON LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS AND RELIGIOUS SERVICES

August 7, 2021

In the face of the coronavirus pandemic, we have adapted how we have lived our daily lives, as well as the ways we worshiped as a Church.

Our priority continues to be our need to care for and protect one another. As certain restrictions have been lifted and others reimposed, all parishes and Pastors are to implement the new guidelines with prudence, following public health precautions, and with the safety and wellbeing of their parishioners in mind. Accordingly, face coverings must be used indoors for the safety and protection of all people regardless of vaccination status in accordance with the mandates of the Counties of Los Angeles and Santa Barbara and the cities of Pasadena and Long Beach. Face coverings must be used indoors by unvaccinated individuals in Ventura County. Please check for updates with your local health departments frequently as their orders and recommendations change rapidly and be prepared to modify your policies and procedures accordingly.

These new guidelines, effective August 7, 2021, replace all previous guidelines established by the Archdiocese.

General Considerations for Liturgical Celebrations and Religious Services

- All liturgical celebrations (e.g., Weekday Masses, Sunday Masses, First Communions, Confirmation, Weddings, Baptisms, Funerals, Quinceañeras) and other religious services (e.g., Private Prayer, Adoration, Devotions, Prayer Services) are allowed to take place indoors without capacity limitations, social distancing, and/or prearranged “reservation” systems. All indoor participants are required to wear face coverings, regardless of vaccination status in Los Angeles County, Santa Barbara County and the cities of Pasadena and Long Beach. All indoor unvaccinated participants must wear face coverings in Ventura County.
- Parishes may hold prayer group meetings, ministerial gatherings, and social gatherings provided that mandated and strongly recommended public health precautions are observed, including the use of face coverings indoors according to City and County Orders.
- Mass and all other liturgical celebrations are to be celebrated according to what is described in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and to rubrics appropriate to each Rite, without exceptions or restrictions unless otherwise noted in this document.
- All liturgical ministers—Altar Servers (vested), Lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (if needed), Ministers of Hospitality—should exercise their ministries as usual in the celebration of the liturgy but must wear face coverings indoors whenever mandated by local health departments.
- Entry health screenings can be done through self-attestation with posted signs at entrances without the need for a staff member or volunteer to be present. Posted signs must instruct individuals with COVID-19 symptoms not to enter the building.
- Parishes do not have the responsibility to verify who is and who is not vaccinated except in Ventura County, where self-attestation is acceptable.
- Parishes may provide an area within the church building for social distancing of at least three feet between family units.

- Hand sanitation must be available for all visitors. This could take several forms, ranging from touch-less dispensers of antibacterial gel at the doors or wash stations in restrooms. The use of hand sanitizer is not required for entry into buildings.
- Parishes are not required to sanitize after each liturgy or service but instead should observe sensible public health precautions.
- Liturgical singing can take place while wearing face coverings.
- Hymnals, missalettes, and worship aids may be placed in the pews or distributed for use by the faithful.
- Collection baskets may be placed in a location where people can provide their donations during the preparation of the gifts or as the faithful enter or exit the church. Parishes may also use collection baskets on poles handled by Ministers of Hospitality during the offertory collection.
- For now, Holy Communion will be offered in the form of bread. Communion on the hand is strongly encouraged. The Ministers and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are encouraged to sanitize their hands before distributing Communion and after Communion has concluded.
- The distribution of Holy Communion is only to take place at its proper time at the Communion Rite after the *Agnus Dei*. Distribution and reception of Communion in the form of a “drive-thru” style is not allowed.
- Liturgical processions may resume at their proper times (i.e., the entrance procession, the Gospel procession, the procession of the offertory gifts, and the recessional procession).
- Water in the baptismal font and holy water fonts should be refreshed frequently.

Confessions

- Parishes are to have scheduled Confession times and Priests may hear individual confession upon request.

Baptisms/Confirmations

- The proper Trinitarian formula must be used.
- Immersion fonts will not be used to confer Baptism. The water used for the Rite of Baptism is not to be reused. Blessed water is to be disposed appropriately after the Baptism is finished.
- The minister, being sensible with handwashing and public health precautions, including face coverings when required, may administer the Holy Oils appropriate to each Rite in the usual manner.

Anointing of the Sick/Holy Communion to the Homebound

- As an important part of ministry, Priests are to attend to the needs of those who ask for the Anointing of the Sick.
- Ministers attending to the needs of the sick or homebound are to observe all mandates and strong recommendations from public health departments. If in a hospital setting, check in with proper medical personnel and follow their directions before entering and upon leaving the room of the patient. For home visits, this includes but may not be limited to handwashing before and after the visit and wearing a facemask.
- The Priest, being sensible with handwashing and public health precautions, may administer the Oil of the Sick in the usual manner.

- Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion may be utilized to fulfill requests of bringing Holy Communion to the homebound. It is highly recommended that they be fully vaccinated against the coronavirus and wear a face covering if indoors.
- It is not necessary for the recipient of Homebound Ministry to be fully vaccinated.

Weddings/Funerals/Quinceañeras

- Please observe any general considerations noted above along with mandated and strongly recommended public health precautions.

Reporting

- In the event a location learns that any employee, clergy or other religious, volunteer, parishioner, student or parent/guardian is diagnosed with COVID-19, please report the case to the LA Archdiocese COVID response team using [this form](#) or contact Marina A. Macchiagodena at mamacchiagodena@la-archdiocese.org or Isaac Cuevas at icuevas@la-archdiocese.org.