



Diocese of Austin

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Vicar General

Temporary COVID-19 Protocols for the Celebration of the Sacraments for the Diocese of Austin Updated as of July 1, 2020

Pursuant to Bishop Vásquez' decree dated April 30, 2020, parishes in the Diocese of Austin must follow these revised temporary protocols when celebrating the sacraments, until further notice. These revised protocols replace those published on May 29, 2020.

1. Attendance at liturgies may not exceed 50% of full seating capacity of churches or buildings in which they are celebrated.
2. Encourage parishioners to maintain safe distance between each other.
3. Inform the following parishioners that they may remain at home to make a Spiritual Communion on a live stream of Mass: (i) those who are sick; (ii) those who are 65 or older; (iii) those who have been advised by health care workers or caregivers to not attend Mass; (iv) those who sincerely believe that attending Mass will jeopardize their health or the health of a person with whom they reside.
4. Provide hand sanitation opportunities at entrances and to the liturgical ministers.
5. Encourage the faithful to wear facemasks while on parish campuses, mandating them if the local civil orders require.
6. Disinfect the top and back of pews and other regularly touched surfaces after each liturgy.
7. Distribute Holy Communion in the hand (the species of bread), encouraging the faithful, for the health of others in the community, to receive in the hand.
8. Return to the regular schedule for Sunday and daily Mass and confessions as they were prior to Lent, with a deadline of August 1, 2020 for full resumption of regular schedule.

These temporary protocols apply to all liturgies and remain in effect until updated or rescinded.

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Very Reverend James A. Misko
Vicar General