



Blessed Trinity Catholic Church

COVID 19 SAFETY PLAN

The following information is coming from the Diocese of St. Augustine about the COVID-19 Safety Plan.

With Florida relaxing its COVID-19 restrictions and permitting businesses to open again, many parishioners are asking if restrictions will also be lifted at churches and chapels in the Diocese of St. Augustine.

While the state has relaxed its guidelines, the CDC and the Florida Department of Health cautions that relaxing restrictions too soon may cause an increase in COVID-19 cases as we struggle with the COVID-19 variants.

Parishes will not advance to the next phase until the Diocese of St. Augustine advises. And while the diocese is operating under one plan to serve the many under our guidance, we expect some parishes to progress to the next phase quicker than others due to their county's conditions.

Our bishop said that as we move forward looking for the best of our people of God, he announced on May 4th, 2021 that the general dispensation from the

obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation will expire on the Vigil of Pentecost, it means on May 22nd, 2021.

The use of face coverings shall continue until public health guidance suggests otherwise. With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and other public health agencies, we have learned much about the disease and how it spreads. It appears that close contact with infected persons poses the most significant risk.

Contagion from other sources has proven negligible and is preventable by good personal hygiene, social distancing, and face coverings.

I do realize that City and State Officials have lifted mask mandates, but please understand that we are following the guidelines set forth by the Diocese and I am being obedient to my Bishop. Therefore, all

mask requirements remain intact.

The pandemic has meant a huge imposition on normal life. It will likely take more time before we return to some semblance of "normal". As we do so, our bishop is asking us to continue cooperating with our safety guidelines.

For Blessed Trinity, we will gradually begin decreasing the space for physical distancing. Rest assured that we will still maintain sections for those who are not comfortable with decreased distancing. We will continue with sanitizing the Church and Hand Sanitizer will be available.



Particular Dispensation Information

The general obligation to attend Mass on Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation is to be reinstated in the Diocese of St. Augustine, effective **Saturday, May 22nd, 2021.**

Considering the necessity of being physically present with our brothers and sisters at Mass on Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation for the Eucharist, Bishop Felipe J. Estevez asks Catholics to make a sincere judgment about whether or not these circumstances apply.

While the general dispensation is removed, there are specific instances where the dispensation will continue. One does not have an obligation to attend Mass on Sunday in the following circumstances:

- You are ill, or your health condition would be significantly compromised if you were to contract an infectious illness (i.e., you have underlying conditions or are in a high-risk category). ***Please use the dispensation and do not attend Mass.***
- You exhibit flu-like symp-

toms. ***Please use the dispensation and do not attend Mass.***

- You have good reason to think you might be asymptomatic of a contagious illness (e.g., you were in recent contact with someone who tested positive for an infectious



disease such as COVID-19 or influenza). ***Please use the dispensation and do not attend Mass.***

- You care for the sick, homebound or infirmed.

- You are pregnant.
- Those 65 years of age or older (per the CDC's recommendation of high-risk individuals).
- You cannot attend Mass through no fault of your own (e.g., no Mass is offered, you are infirmed, or, while wanting to go, you are prevented for some reason you cannot control (e.g., ride did not show up, the church was at capacity).
- These categories will be reviewed in due course and revised as needed.
- Those who do not attend Mass must still observe the Lord's Day and are encouraged to spend time in prayer on Sunday, meditating on the Lord's passion, death and resurrection; and excellent way to do this is through participating in a broadcast or live stream of the Sunday Mass.