



# THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PHOENIX

## **Diocese of Phoenix COVID-19 Update for Parishes Re: Governor Ducey's June 29 Executive Order**

**June 30, 2020**

In light of Governor Ducey's June 29, 2020 - Executive Order "Pausing of Arizona's Reopening," the following communication was developed to assist you in continuing to provide the essential service of offering Masses. We remain focused on the physical well-being of our parish staff, volunteers, parishioners, and the wider community.

The Executive Order restricting "organized public events" to less than 50 people does not apply to religious gatherings, but in the spirit of caution and cooperation Bishop has given permission to pastors and parochial administrators to implement this where desired. Likewise, based upon parish circumstances and needs, pastors and administrators are given permission to suspend public Masses if the need arises in their own parish. The Chancery should be notified when a situation arises in a parish that makes this necessary. All parishes are directed to continue to implement our safety precautions already in place.

Our efforts to diminish the spread of COVID-19 remain an important part of our participation for the common good. For this reason, we thank you for your efforts thus far and seek to reinforce the practices you have implemented to reduce risk when celebrating Masses:

1. Reminding people that physical distancing and spacing must be practiced by all individuals on parish properties, keeping at least 6 feet from others at all times.
2. No Church should exceed 25% seating capacity and you may limit to 50 people if that is determined to be best for your Church and community.
3. Requiring all who attend Mass to wear a face mask in a spirit of care for their fellow parishioners, including all staff and volunteers when in public areas or when physical distancing is not possible.
4. Urging people to stay home if they are feeling sick or have a fever, if a family member is ill or vulnerable, if they have been traveling or in large crowds, or if they are at risk because of preexisting conditions or age.
5. Reminding the faithful that the preferred method to receive Holy Communion during this time is in the hand. It is safer for the faithful, for the priests, and for everyone receiving Holy Communion.
6. Reminding people that that the Sunday Obligation is dispensed and to watch the livestream.
7. Frequently cleaning and sanitizing public places on parish campuses.
8. Regularly evaluating procedures and practices to improve efforts to diminish the spread of COVID-19.



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Again, these are important and effective precautionary measures meant to reduce risk, but the risk of coming into contact with the virus remains. It is important for individuals and families to take personal responsibility to protect themselves.

Attached are the guidelines and directives that have been shared to date as a reminder and review. All other gatherings should be limited to no more than 10 people, and only for meetings where virtual gatherings are not possible.

## **Be Healthy – Be Smart – Be Holy**

Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Diocese of Phoenix, pray for us.

Jesus, the Divine Healer, we trust in You.