

Guidelines for Public Worship During A Pandemic

Archdiocese of Cincinnati – Immaculate Conception Church, Celina, OH

Guidelines until further notice:

- Catholics in the archdiocese continue to be dispensed from the obligation of attending Sunday Mass until June 4, 2021. Their desire to participate in Mass could be fulfilled on any day of the week. Those who are at risk or fearful that they or their family might become sick are encouraged to stay home and join the Church by viewing live-streamed Masses. Family members are invited to bring communion to home bound family members. Contact the Parish Office for more information. The general obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation (including the Saturday/Vigil Mass) will be reinstated effective the weekend of June 5-6, 2021 noting the exemption for those who are seriously ill or have significant health risks. You can read more about the obligation to attend Mass on the next page.
- IC Masses, 5 PM Saturday, 8 AM and 11 AM Sunday will be broadcast live and available after by clicking on <https://celina-ic.org/> and then the “Live Stream” on the top right corner of the IC webpage and follow prompts to the Mass. You can also find mass on FB at <https://www.facebook.com/Immaculateconceptioncelina/>
- Wearing masks is encouraged, especially for those who are high risk and/or fearful of larger crowds.
- Holy Water is available in church and is refreshed regularly.
- Missalettes and song books are available in church.
- Offering boxes/baskets are located at the entrances of church. Please drop in your envelope/offering as you enter. We are grateful for your continued generosity. Offertory envelopes can also be dropped off or sent to the parish office or online contributions can be made at <https://celina-ic.weshareonline.org/index.aspx> Ushers gather collection during Creed or Prayer of the Faithful and lock in the safe box in entrance of church.
- **Every other pew in the SOUTH WING of church** will be used for each mass to assure social distancing. All other pews in church are available for use if needed. Color coded designations **Saturday 5 PM Mass Blue pews**, **Sunday 8 AM Green pews**, **Sunday 11 AM Blue pews** will remain on the ends of the pews to encourage using every other pew when possible. Parishioners will process forward for communion. The SAMPLE Social Distancing Seating diagram is not an actual required seating chart but a sample of what social distancing seating may look like.
- Ushers are asked to encourage/help people begin seating in the front of church, move to the center of long pews, sit as families in longer pews and individuals sit in areas that would allow maximum seating, i.e. individual chairs.
- Offertory procession remains suspended until further notice.
- Please refrain from physical contact at the Our Father or Sign of Peace, may bow or wave.
- Holy Communion will be distributed at the front of church with parishioners processing forward in the center and side aisles and returning in the side aisles of each section. Parishioners are asked to social distance in communion lines. Ministers of communion will wear masks.
 - No Holy Communion from the chalice by the faithful.
 - Holy Communion on the tongue is strongly discouraged. If parishioner is insistent receiving on the tongue, communion distributor must sanitize hands before proceeding.
- Ushers asked to count the number of attendees at Mass to anticipate future crowds.
- Bulletins will be available after Mass either from ushers or laying on tables with appropriate social distancing.

CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF OHIO

The Bishops of Ohio Announce the Lifting of the Dispensation from the Obligation to attend Holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation

May 13, 2021

As we move beyond the worst of the coronavirus pandemic and access to the COVID-19 vaccine has become more widespread, the time has arrived for the good of all the faithful when the general dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation is no longer necessary.

Together, the Bishops of Ohio have decided that the general obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation (including the Saturday/Vigil Mass) is to be reinstated (CIC, can. 1247). This will take effect in each of the Dioceses of Ohio the weekend of June 5-6, 2021. As has always been the case, those who have a serious reason are exempt from attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2181). This includes those who are ill, have *significant* health risk factors or care for someone who is immuno-compromised or ill, as well as those who have significant fear or anxiety of contracting the coronavirus in a large group of persons. Nevertheless, these persons should observe the Lord's Day (CIC, can. 1247) and are encouraged to spend time in prayer on Sunday, meditating on the Lord's passion, death and resurrection; an appropriate way to do this is through viewing a broadcast of the Sunday Mass. Masses that are broadcast through various media are not intended as a substitute nor do they fulfill the obligation for the persons who are able to gather for a Sunday celebration and other Holy Days of Obligation. Instead, they are intended for the sick, home-bound, the imprisoned, etc., who are unable to attend Mass in person. Kindly consult your pastor with any specific questions regarding the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.

The book of Exodus reminds us to keep holy the Sabbath day (Exodus 20: 8-10). As Catholics, we are invited by God to gather together in community, and participate fully in the Sunday Eucharist, which is the "source and summit of the Christian life." "Participation in the communal celebration of the Sunday Eucharist is a testimony of belonging and of being faithful to Christ and to his Church. The faithful give witness by this to their communion in faith and charity. Together they testify to God's holiness and their hope of salvation. They strengthen one another under the guidance of the Holy Spirit" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2182).

The obligation to attend Mass on Sunday and Holy Days is not something God asks of us out of his own necessity to be worshipped, but rather a gift to the faithful for their spiritual well-being, eternal salvation and formation in our relationship with God and one another. To that end, Saint John Vianney rightly asserts, "There is nothing so great as the Eucharist. If God had something more precious, He would have given it to us." The Eucharist is the greatest gift Christ left to the Church—the gift of Himself. There is no substitute for Mass celebrated in person.

We are profoundly grateful to our pastors and all of the faithful for their flexibility, fidelity and great generosity in support of the mission of the Church throughout this unprecedented time. As we prepare for the reinstatement of the obligation to attend Mass, we are excited once again to gather together in person without restrictions in our parish churches, most fittingly on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. As we reflect on our Lord's goodness and mercy in the midst of the sacrifices made during the coronavirus pandemic, we ask Saint Joseph to intercede for us, that through his fatherly protection and care, we may experience a renewal of faith in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

We welcome you back with great joy and eagerness!



The Most Rev. Dennis M. Schnurr
Archdiocese of Cincinnati



The Most Rev. Robert J. Brennan
Diocese of Columbus



The Most Rev. Edward C. Malesic
Diocese of Cleveland



The Most Rev. David J. Bonnar
Diocese of Youngstown



The Most Rev. Daniel E. Thomas
Diocese of Toledo



The Most Rev. Jeffrey M. Monforton
Diocese of Steubenville