



**OFFICE OF THE VICAR GENERAL
DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN**

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**REOPENING THE CHURCHES FOR LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS
IMPORTANT UPDATE**

**PLEASE SEE BELOW FOR IMPORTANT UPDATES ON THE
OPENING DATES FOR STAGE 2 & STAGE 3**

Stage 1 was the reopening of the churches for private prayer and devotion. At that Stage we learned the best practices of good hygiene and social distancing. Those lessons will be important as we move to Stages 2, 3, and 4.

**Stage 2: Limited (25% Capacity) Celebrations of Daily Mass
MONDAY, JUNE 29, 2020**

**Stage 3: Limited (25% Capacity) Celebrations of Sunday Mass
SATURDAY EVENING, JULY 4, 2020 and SUNDAY, JULY 5, 2020**

Stage 4: Celebration of First Holy Communion and Confirmation (No date has been set yet)

NOTE: The City of New York is scheduled to enter its Phase 2 on Monday, June 22nd. Bishop DiMarzio has determined that the parishes in Brooklyn and Queens can open for daily Mass on June 29, 2020 and Sunday Masses on the weekend of July 4-5, 2020. This is to provide ample opportunity for Pastors & Administrators to ready their churches and their parishioners for their welcome back.

Below are guidelines to be followed as each stage is introduced. Please read them over carefully.

STAGES 2 & 3: (LIMITED 25% CAPACITY) CELEBRATIONS OF MASS

THE DIRECTIVES GIVEN FOR STAGE 1 REOPENING OF CHURCHES REMAIN IN EFFECT FOR STAGES 2 & 3. This includes all the measures taken to ensure good hygiene and cleaning of the church, including the disinfection of hands, the wearing of masks and social distancing.

The announcement of the opening dates in advance will provide ample opportunity to allow Pastors and Administrators to ready the churches for the reopening. If anyone needs help, please contact Greg Roach at Rocklyn Asset for assistance (groach@rocklynasset.org).

Pastors and Administrators are encouraged to resume their normal schedules in order to ensure social distancing and not exceed the 25% capacity. Sunday Mass schedules may need to be adjusted according to the needs of the community (increased number of Masses or decreased number of Masses). Please adapt the directives according to the particular needs of the parish, while maintaining the important guidelines outlined here. Some of the suggestions offered could be amended to fit particular circumstances.

NOTE: A PARISH MAY NOT BE READY TO BEGIN THE PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF MASS ON THE INDICATED DATES. IF THAT IS THE CASE, PLEASE DETERMINE THE MOST APPROPRIATE

THE PUBLIC CELEBRATION OF MASS

(These guidelines will apply for the eventual public celebration of daily Mass in Stage 2 and the eventual celebration of Sunday Mass in Stage 3)

- Pastors and Administrators must devise a system of ensuring the limit on the number of people in the church. This number is based on the current guidelines.
- Priests who are ill or otherwise in a compromised state should not celebrate Mass publicly.
- All ministers for the Mass (celebrant, deacon, lector) **must** sanitize their hands before Mass begins.
- For the daily celebration of Mass, please limit the number of ministers for Mass. There should be only one (1) lector and no altar servers.
 - *Suggestion: A lectern could be set for the Celebrant to use for the Collect and the Prayer after Communion.*
 - *Suggestion: A separate podium or lectern should be set up for the lector while the priest will use the pulpit or ambo. The lector should not carry in a Gospel Book and the lectionary should be set and opened to the correct page for the Mass.*
- There should be no entrance procession for all Masses, Sunday and weekday. Celebrants should not wear a mask or gloves at this time.
- Music ministry should be limited to the organist and a cantor using social distancing. The cantor should not sing from the same place from which the lector reads. Choirs should not be used at this time since social distancing will be impossible for them.
- There should be no missals or worship aids available.
 - *Suggestion: The Mass itself and homilies could be shortened where possible to allow Mass to be celebrated in an abbreviated time, allowing for extra time to clean the church after Mass.*
- There is no exchange of peace and no holding of hands at the Lord's Prayer.
 - *Suggestion: A single offertory basket can be placed in a secure location in church for people to place their donations. Parishioners are to be encouraged strongly to use e-giving services.*
- Concelebrating priests should receive Holy Communion by **intinction**. Consecrated Hosts are to be left on the paten for each concelebrant to take and intinct. Hosts to be consecrated at the Mass for distribution to the people should be kept to the side of the altar, away from the Host consecrated for the priests' use, on a separate corporal. Alternatively, each concelebrant could have a separate chalice reserved for his own use.
- Holy Communion is to be distributed by the celebrant, concelebrating priests, and/or extraordinary minister of Holy Communion who will not wear gloves but should wear masks. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should only be used if there are not enough priests in the parish to assist. The Host should be allowed to "fall" (reverently) into the communicant's hand to avoid any physical contact. The hands should be disinfected before distribution of Holy Communion. Hand disinfectant should be available nearby those distributing Holy Communion.

- *Suggestion: The communicant should come before the Minister of Communion with the mask on for the dialogue (“The Body of Christ. Amen.”) and then, moving to the side, lower the mask and consume the Eucharist and replace the mask.*
- If Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are used, they must be diligently instructed on the procedures for giving Communion to the faithful. They must follow the same guidelines the priests and deacons will follow.
- The Precious Blood is not to be distributed to the faithful.
- People should come for Communion in the normal way, observing at least 6 feet of distance between them as they approach.
- **IT IS VERY STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT THE FAITHFUL RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION IN THE HAND. Pastors and Administrators must strongly suggest this to the people emphasizing that this is for the safety of those receiving Holy Communion and of the minister of Holy Communion.** While this may be difficult for some people, they must be reminded of the reverent way to receive in the hand. **IF PEOPLE WISH TO RECEIVE ON THE TONGUE, THEY SHOULD COME FORWARD AT THE END OF THE COMMUNION LINE, SO THAT THEY ARE THE LAST ONES RECEIVING,** so that the Communion ministers can disinfect their hands if need be after each person receives.
- When the communicants receive the Sacred Host, they should move to the side and consume It immediately.
- If the minister distributing Holy Communion has unintentional contact with someone’s hand, the minister is to stop and disinfect the hands before continuing. An ablution cup and hand sanitizer should be set near the Ministers of Holy Communion to purify their fingers before using the hand sanitizer.
- **After distribution of Holy Communion, the ministers’ hands should be sanitized.**
- There is to be no recessional procession. There should be no stopping to greet parishioners as they depart the church.
- If pastors or administrators are considering outdoor celebrations of Mass, whether in a tent, parking lot or other open space, social distancing regarding seating, and all other directives pertaining to churches and the celebration of Mass must be observed.

CELEBRATIONS OF FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS AND CONFIRMATIONS

First Communions can be celebrated at an appropriate time following all of the guidelines for the celebration of the Eucharist.

Confirmations will be rescheduled at an appropriate time. Please consult with the Bishop assigned to your parish for Confirmation and follow the guidelines that will be issued later for the celebration of Confirmation.

These celebrations apply in Stage 4 (see above).

QUESTIONS?

Questions about any of the above guidelines or about particular situations may be addressed to the Vicar General’s Office (vgeneral@diobrook.org).