

Pastor's Statement for Parish Safety Protocols

Our goal is to safeguard human life and the common good reasonably and responsibly. We must exercise good citizenship in observing any limitation or restriction as we gradually begin opening Our Lady of Grace Roman Catholic Parish. As advocates for justice and charity, we must comply with these regulations. We are our brother's and sister's keeper and we should be motivated to cooperate with public safety norms, given our reverence for life and human dignity. The plan to gradually reopen is taking shape and, as this situation is fluid, our congregation must also be flexible as we move forward. The following is the plan that Our Lady of Grace Roman Catholic Parish in Maricopa, AZ will implement:

COMMUNICATION

We will be communicating by **email through Constant Contact** and **by phone via our Robocall system**. We will also be using our **social media, parish website and bulletin** to ensure communication is clear and timely. ***We will be updating our parish community immediately if there are any major changes to the safety protocols.***

SUNDAY MASS OBLIGATION

The Sunday Mass Obligation is suspended indefinitely for all persons living in or visiting in the Tucson Diocese.

Those in the **vulnerable classification** are **strongly urged to remain at home** and not come onto the parish property.

- **Vulnerable classification is considered as follows:**
 - The elderly 65 years old and above.
 - Those who are taking care of the elderly, or who live with someone with a compromised immune system.
 - Those who have an inherent risk or chronic health conditions, regardless of age.

There is an inherent risk, regardless of age or health, in attending any public event. This includes religious services. While we are working to reduce the risk, there are no risk-free situations. This will be posted on signs at the front of the church.

ACCEPTANCE OF INHERENT RISK

A parishioner's presence at a public event (including attending Mass) constitutes his or her understanding and acceptance of this essential level of risk. The Diocese of Tucson and Our Lady of Grace Roman Catholic Parish assume no liability in the exposure or spread of Covid-19. Parishioners who enter our church assume all inherent risks related to coronavirus exposure.

Feeling Sick/ill

Those who are **feeling ill in any way** are urged, in the strongest sense, to **remain at home and not come onto parish property.**

MASS SCHEDULE:

(Masses on Friday, Saturday, and Monday will be the Sunday Mass Liturgy.)

Friday: 6:30 p.m. (English) – Capacity 85 people

Saturday: 4:00 p.m. (English) – Capacity 85 people
6:30 p.m. (Spanish) – Capacity 85 people

Sunday: 8:00 a.m. (English) – Capacity 85 people
10:00 a.m. (English) – Capacity 85 people
12:00 p.m. (Spanish) – Capacity 85 people

Doors will open 30 minutes prior to Mass.

We will Live-Stream Sunday Masses at 10:00 a.m. (English) and 12:00 p.m. (Spanish) and post Mass recordings for those who will be attending via internet.

The church will be closed at the following times to ensure proper cleaning:

- Friday – Closed at 11:30 a.m. Church will open at 6:00 p.m.
- Saturday – Closed all day until 3:30 p.m.
- Sunday – Church will open for Mass beginning at 7:30 a.m.
- Monday through Thursday the church will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. for private prayer.

There will be no daily public Masses on Monday through Thursday.

MASS REGISTRATION – PROCEDURES ON HOW TO REGISTER FOR MASS

The **church will be limited to 85 people for each Mass.** You may register for a Mass on the email that will be sent through Constant Contact, bulletin and/or website. Please individually list the **names of ALL your family members who will be attending, one name per slot.**

- Mass registration through SignupGenius.com will open **Monday at 1:00 p.m. and stay opened until Friday at 10:00 a.m. for Sunday Mass.**
- Those who do not have emails in our system may call the office at (520) 568-4605 to register for a Mass.

THE DAY OF MASS

Please **arrive 15-30 minutes before Mass starts**. If you are late, your seat may be forfeited.

Masks are mandatory for those 6 years old and above. They are a firm requirement for all persons age six and older. There are no exceptions to this protocol as per the Bishop's directives. Please wear a mask when entering the church. The use of a face mask is a sign of our desire to do our part in helping to prevent others from potential contagion. Parishioners with a health condition making it impossible for them to make use of a mask should remain at home so that they limit their risk of exposure to themselves and others. As our clergy are repeatedly in our churches, **in the words of Bishop Weisenburger, "The use of a mask is an especially strong sign of your support for your priests and ministers."**

- *Note: Masks do not need to be worn by the priest as he celebrates Mass. There will be no ministers close by him (such as at the pulpit while preaching or at the altar for the Eucharistic prayer – the deacon will stand several feet away or remain at his chair.)*

If a mask cannot be worn due to a medical condition, we are highly recommending to stay home and watch the live-stream Masses as anyone with a medical condition who cannot wear a mask is considered having a compromised immunity and remaining at home would protect them against any undue risks.

Masks are required for Mass. No exceptions.

Please go to the main entrance of the church and **check in at the southeast doors**. **All other doors to the church will be locked**. Parishioners may **ONLY** enter through the front handicap door at the main entrance of the church.

Please respect any sign posted at the church entrance indicating the "CHURCH IS FULL".

Holy Water fonts will remain empty.

DURING MASS

Some pews will be roped off. **Please do not sit in a row that is roped off**. This is to ensure that we are practicing safe-distancing protocols.

- There will be 2 Ushers assigned per Mass. Ushers will be taking our parishioners to their row. Please do not change the row that you are assigned to.

The use of hymnals and congregational singing is suspended. Singing puts an much greater number of contagion droplets in the air. Instead, we will be **using worship aids printed on paper that an usher (who will be wearing gloves) will hand out when parishioners enter the church**. Those **worship aids must be taken home or thrown in the outside trash** and not left in the church when Mass is finished.

Lectors

- There will be only one Lector per Mass.

Offertory Collection

- Offertory will be **collected at the doors and center of the aisle**. We will have black containers that you may drop your offertory into.

Our Father

- The faithful are **not to hold hands** during the recitation of the Our Father.

Sign of Peace

- The faithful are not to make physical contact when exchanging the Sign of Peace; bowing to each other is an acceptable form.

Receiving Holy Communion

Holy Communion will be offered and distributed at the **end of Mass** outside of the church.

- The North and South side doors will be opened, and the Plastic Protection Shields will be set in place outside the doors.
- The floor will be marked by blue tape as 6' social distance markers. Our priest and one Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist will distribute Holy Communion.
- As parishioners come up to receive Communion, the mask should be pulled down to consume the Blessed Sacrament in the presence of the Eucharistic Minister.
- Once the parishioner has received, they will exit the church through the nearest door.

Gloves will not be worn by those distributing Holy Communion. We will have hand-sanitizer located on the Plastic Protection Shield which will be used to sanitize their hands prior to distributing Communion and as needed. After Mass they will carefully wash their hands.

In this early phase, **Holy Communion will be given only in the hand**. Note: We will be incorporating this procedure in our pre-Mass announcements so the parishioners will know to hold their hand in the form of a cup so that the Eucharist may be gently dropped from the hand of the Minister into the cupped hands of the recipient – avoiding hand-to-hand contact.

END OF MASS

Please **exit the church immediately to receive Communion and proceed directly to your car**. Do not remain in the church parking lots. The church will be closed to disinfect the church prior to the next Mass.

All parishioners will exit through the two side doors (North and South side). As parishioners exit, please respect the social distancing protocols of 6 feet between each family.

The vestibule doors will be opened with the **AC fans running continuously to help with the ventilation** and circulation of air in the church.

CLEANING PROCEDURES

The church will be closed after every Mass. We will be cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces. We will have 3 healthy, non-vulnerable adults wear masks and gloves and will be assigned to the following areas of the church:

- 1) South Side of Church
- 2) North Side of Church
- 3) Vestibule and bathrooms

A checklist will be provided to them along with disinfectant in a spray bottle with paper towels and/or disinfecting wipes. They will check the list off once tasks are completed. The list will include the church pews (seats, pew backs and top rails), door handles, confessional door handles, and chapel kneelers for both the right and left sides of the Church.

Vestibule will include all door handles, stair handrails, light switches, elevator buttons, pews, front doors, hand-sanitizer knobs, and chairs.

Bathrooms will include door handles, light switches, faucet knobs, handles to flush, baby changing tables, paper towel dispensers, and soap dispensers.

Volunteer cleaning crew will remove gloves and masks and dispose of them in a separate trash can with lid.

Drinking fountains will be taped off and not used.

Choir Loft Cleaning Procedures:

After the Mass, Cantor and musician will clean any door handles, stands, chairs and stationary instruments that they have touched.

Microphones

All choir loft microphone mouthpiece, stem/handhold and stands will be disinfected and wiped down. Ambo microphone, stem/handhold will also be disinfected and wiped down. Priest and deacons have their own personal microphone that is not shared.