



ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA OFFICE FOR COMMUNICATIONS

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ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA ANNOUNCES LITURGICAL DIRECTIVES FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRED LITURGY DURING THE PENNSYLVANIA GREEN PHASE AND THE ARCHDIOCESAN OPEN PHASE

On June 26, 2020, the bulk of the five-county region comprising the Archdiocese of Philadelphia will move into the “green” phase of the statewide re-opening plan. The City of Philadelphia will begin to move into the “green” phase on July 3, 2020. The “green” phase continues to require precautions to limit the spread of COVID-19 and our responsibility to observe them for the preservation of public health.

Liturgical directives pertaining to the celebration of the sacred liturgy during the “green” phase and the Archdiocesan “open phase” developed by the Archdiocesan Office for Divine Worship were shared with all priests and deacons yesterday. These directives authorized by Archbishop Nelson J. Pérez go into effect the morning of June 26, 2020. These directives do not conflict with what is restricted for the City of Philadelphia from June 26, 2020 through to July 3, 2020.

These liturgical guidelines are intended to provide for the pastoral needs of the faithful while respecting and abiding by directives from government agencies.

Condensed highlights are presented below. A full copy of the most recent guidelines can be found at <http://www.odwphiladelphia.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Coronavirus-Liturgy-Update-Open-Period-6-24-20.pdf>

- The faithful continue to be dispensed by the Archbishop from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation until further notice.
- During the “green phase,” if adjustments were made to the Mass schedule for Sundays and weekdays, the typical Mass schedule should be restored.
- Live stream services should continue for Mass and other sacramental celebrations and devotions.
- The new Holy Oils will be sent to the Deans the week of June 28, 2020 for distribution to parishes and institutions within the deaneries. More information will be forthcoming.
- All areas of the church are to be sanitized routinely, including the Confessional areas. The guidelines for sanitation provided by the CDC for houses of worship are those endorsed by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. These guidelines indicate that high-touch surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected after each celebration.

- In the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, houses of worship may be occupied up to 75% during the green phase. Access entrances, ramps, and seating are to be clearly marked for persons with disabilities.
- Liturgical singing during the green phase should continue to be kept to a minimum during this period.
- During Mass, Priests, deacons and liturgical ministers are not expected to wear masks or gloves.
- During the “green” phase the strong recommendation remains in force that the faithful receive the Body of Christ in the hand. No one is to be denied Holy Communion on the tongue. Rather, local provisions are to be made for this possibility. Holy Communion is not to be distributed with gloves.
- The celebration of all the sacraments and devotions are to take place as usual, but with due regard for reasonable social distancing and the limitation of 75% occupancy of the church.

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Editor’s Note: The Archdiocese of Philadelphia recently launched “Arise: Restoring Catholic Life After the Pandemic,” an initiative to invigorate parish life after COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. The initiative provides parishes and Archdiocesan institutions with guidance and resources for worship, catechesis, evangelization, and communications to help clergy and faithful reintegrate into active, in-person participation in Mass and parish activities. For more information, please visit <http://archphila.org/arise/>.