



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Updated Directives During the Covid-19 Pandemic For the weekend of July 3-4, 2021

Introduction

Given the reinstatement by the Bishops of New Jersey of the obligation to attend Sunday Mass and the lessening of restrictions from the state, the following is provided as an immediate update to the May 25 directives.

Still in effect: Masks will no longer be required for fully vaccinated persons. If not fully vaccinated, persons are strongly encouraged to follow CDC guidance and wear a face mask in public settings. Masks are still required on public transit and in health care settings, prisons, child-care facilities, and schools, among other places. People will no longer be required to socially distance indoors or outdoors, although unvaccinated persons should continue to maintain a safe distance from others.

As of June 28, all indoor gathering limits were lifted.

Although these directives represent a reduction of pandemic restrictions, the local pastors/administrators/chaplains can impose stricter regulations as needed. These may include wearing masks, social distancing, and signing in for Mass or activities.

These directives apply to all indoor and outdoor events.

1. LITURGICAL MINISTERS

All ministries may return to full service – altar servers, lectors, ushers, greeters, and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. Masks are no longer required for all vaccinated ministers, including those distributing Communion (Priests, Deacons, and EMs). However, masks may be worn for those who prefer to wear one during the liturgy.

2. COMMUNION

Communion on the tongue is now permitted. Pastors may accommodate this as needed in their particular parish.

At this time, Communion from the cup should not be distributed to the assembly.

- Priests, concelebrants, and deacons should receive from separate chalices.
- The cup may be given to the bride and groom at a nuptial mass from a separate chalice.
- When an individual can only receive from the cup, a chalice may be prepared in advance for Communion.

3. SIGN OF PEACE

The invitation to share the Sign of Peace should continue. Parishioners could be reminded that it is not required to touch during the sign of peace.

4. ALTAR SERVERS

Vaccinated altar servers, age 12 and over, may resume their role with the permission of their parents or guardians. If they are under the age of 12 and are not yet eligible for vaccination, they should wear masks. A parental permission form for altar servers under the age of 18 is required for those assisting in livestreaming Masses. The form can be accessed through the Catechetical Office: https://rcan-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/catechetical_office_rcan_org/EQrey-HItYtBic_bK3qWUIYB3nEU4Dxr_940UDy39SEuyw?e=689PEe.

5. OFFERTORY COLLECTION

Ushers may take up the collection at the proper time, or baskets may be placed at the entrance of the church for the collection.

6. PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS

The procession to present the gifts of bread and wine and the collection can be resumed.

7. BAPTISMAL FONTS

Baptismal fonts and holy water receptacles may be filled.

8. BAPTISM

One vessel (or more) of fresh water should be blessed and used for baptizing.

9. Music

Vaccinated music ministers (cantors, choirs, etc.) do not require masks or shields. Music ministers who are not vaccinated should wear a mask. All musical instruments are permitted.

10. OUTDOOR MASSES

Outdoor Masses may continue as needed.

11. SANITIZING

The cleaning and sanitizing of churches and common spaces should be done regularly. It is not required after every liturgy.

12. PARISH MEETINGS

Parish meetings in person may resume. Those vaccinated are not required to wear masks for indoor meetings, nor are they required to maintain social distancing. The same recommendations for Mass apply to those not vaccinated.