

April, 2021

Dear parents,

Our parish First Communion celebrations begin next weekend, April 24/25. **Be assured that we are doing our best to keep you, your families and the rest of our parishioners healthy during your/their time in church! Most importantly, we are eager to celebrate this special time in the lives of your children and families.** Please read the following information for a better understanding of our policies and what will happen during these Masses.

-- **Take your temperature** at home; if 100.4 degrees or above - **stay home**. No one is obligated to attend Mass if you/they feel unsafe or are at any health risk. We are happy to reschedule your child's First Communion due to sickness or another need.

-- **All Church entrances and restrooms** are now open.

-- **Hand sanitizer stations** will be at the entrances; *please use them before entering church.*

-- **Masks/face coverings must be worn at all times** by anyone two years and older. *Bring your own; limited disposable masks will be available but NO child size masks are available.*

-- Each family will be given *one pew in the front center aisles*. **Look for the white ribbons and select your pew upon arriving.** *Please arrive a little early to get settled before Mass begins. Remember to bring your child's First Communion banner to mark your pew!*

-- Due to **social distancing requirements**, *every other pew* is marked as **not** available for seating. Immediate household members and others in your "bubble" may sit together. *All others must follow the 6 foot social distancing rule* at all times. Additional guests may sit elsewhere in the Church.

-- *Please pick up your child's/childrens' First Communion certificate(s) which can be found on the altar rail at the front of the Church.*

-- **First Communicants will remain with their parents at all times**, most of the time in their respective pew.

-- The liturgy itself will be simplified, with minimal ministers other than the presider. There will be instrumental music but **NO congregational singing**. A cantor will sing from the choir loft.

-- At **Communion time**, *First Communicants will approach Father with a parent standing on either side*. The parish technology expert, Mr. Martinek, filmed a short demonstration for First Communion families on *how to receive Holy Communion*. **Click here to view this video:** <https://youtu.be/9TB2OYuJxOY>.

-- *We are only distributing the bread during these times, NO cup.* \*\*\*Non-Catholic parents who wish to receive a blessing should cross their arms over their chest. **First Communicants and their families should return to their pew via the side aisle after receiving Communion.**

-- After all First Communicants and their parents have received Communion, *middle section pews* will approach Father or the Eucharistic Minister via the center aisle. **Side section pews will exit to aisles closest to the walls, go to the back of the church, and approach for Communion by way of the center aisle.**

-- All should receive the host in hand, then step aside and lower their mask to consume, then replace their mask, then return to their pew via the side aisle. *Anyone wishing to receive on the tongue should come at the end of the line. Communion ministers will need to sanitize their fingers after each person who receives on his/her tongue.*

-- At the conclusion of Mass, please depart via designated exits and maintain social distancing, and please take care NOT to block the path of others who are departing. **We encourage you to take family pictures outside.** *However, if you choose to take a picture in the Church, please respect our rules for masks and social distancing.*

***--Don't forget the First Communion certificates and banners when you leave!***

-- Finally, the entire **church must be sanitized after each Mass.** We are happy to take care of sanitizing your reserved pews. However, *please tell your guests that tables in the back of the church contain spray bottles and paper towels for sanitizing their spaces.* **We would greatly appreciate their assistance in doing this for the safety of all; this takes very little time if all assist.**

We are very grateful for your attention to these diocesan and Church of the Gesu policies!! Don't hesitate to contact me with any questions that remain.

**Most importantly we are truly excited for you and your families as we approach these beautiful celebrations!**

Sincerely,

Marcia Leous  
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AMDG