



## **Opening of our Churches during Phase I Re-Opening Florida Operational Procedures**

These are guidelines to follow now that Bishop Noonan is allowing a ‘soft opening’ of parish churches during Governor DeSantis’ Phase I Re-Opening Florida. It will be the responsibility of each pastor and his staff to develop the detailed procedures on how to accomplish these guidelines.

### ***Before Opening the Church for the First Time***

The Church should receive a thorough cleaning. **Please do not spend money to pay for a vendor to “sanitize” the church building for COVID19.** Churches have been closed for several weeks and per the CDC guidelines COVID19 dies in 3 days or less.

- However, there may be dust and dirt which is normal. When you clean, look for mold.
- Any envelopes, books, pamphlets, pencils, paper products, etc. in the pew areas should be removed. There will be no materials in the pews at this time.

### ***Where Parishioners Will Be Allowed to Enter the Church***

- Restrict the access point to the main entrance of the Church only. Try to limit the access point to a few main entrance doors, such as one or two sets of double doors. All other doors should be locked from the outside and have emergency exit ability from the inside while the Church is open.
- When the priests are able to celebrate Mass publicly, it would be wise to mark with tape the distance of 6 feet apart for people to stand while waiting for the reception of Communion.

### ***Daily Protocol for Cleaning and Sanitizing***

The protocol for cleaning and sanitizing should happen at the close of the Church building each day. **Only employees of the Diocese should be performing the sanitization process and protective gear should be worn. Follow CDC Guidelines to wear masks, gloves, etc. and the directions warnings printed on the product label.**

- Lock the building during cleaning/sanitizing.
- Sanitize the interior and exterior surfaces that might have been touched.
- Clean and sanitize the restrooms.
- Wipe pews, kneelers, door handles and knobs, railings, microphones, computers, sound systems, etc. – anything that might have been touched.
- There are thousands of cleaning products that both clean and sanitize or products that just sanitize.
  - Contact your supplier and make sure you are buying a product that is EPA approved to kill the coronavirus. Visit <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2> to find the current list of products that meet EPA’s criteria for use against SARS-Cov-2, the cause of COVID19. There are 17 pages of products so you should be able to find one that is available.

- Make sure the product you choose to use won't harm the surface you are cleaning/sanitizing. Consider testing the product on a small portion of the pew or kneeler to be sure.
- While there are many products from which to choose, not all are currently available. However, while you await products to be shipped, a solution of 1/3 cup of bleach in one gallon of water is easily available and kills all germs (See CDC website, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>). Call your suppliers or check the internet as it can be a good source to find items to purchase. Amazon.com is a great website. Use precaution when visiting a website you do not recognize or have used before because of scams. If the Parish has a school, check with maintenance for the school to see what existing products are already available for the school and use those supplies.

### ***Other Precautions***

- While open to the public we must also follow the guidelines of the county and/or city in which the parish is located. Your local jurisdiction may have other guidelines to consider above the State of Florida requirements.
- Currently, Governor DeSantis has asked that we observe appropriate social distancing with no more than 25% occupancy of our churches during public liturgies. While not required, parishioners will be encouraged to wear face masks as social distancing may be difficult within the church setting.
- Families and couples may sit together, of course, but encourage as best as possible 6' between them and the next person or persons.
- Hospitality ministers may choose to wear gloves and/or masks, but it will not be required. No hospitality minister will be required to 'police' social distancing, but it will be joyously encouraged.

### ***Resources***

- Please share your questions with Rick Baker, [rbaker@orlandodiocese.org](mailto:rbaker@orlandodiocese.org).