



SAINT JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH

Bristow, OK

Procedures for Resuming Public Mass in Time of Pandemic

When:

- Public Masses will resume at St. Joseph's on Wednesday, May 20th at 6:00pm. The first Sunday Mass will be on Sunday, May 24th at 9:00am in the parking lot. The Mass Schedule will be:
 - ▶ **Sundays:** Confessions 8:30am; Mass 9:00am in the parking lot
 - ▶ **Wednesdays:** Confessions 5:45pm; Mass 6:00pm in the church
- When it becomes too hot to have Mass in the parking lot, we resume Sunday Masses in the church. At that time, we will also begin reserving the Wednesday Mass for parishioners who are over the age of 60 or have health vulnerabilities.

Who:

- Continuing to have Sunday Mass in the parking lot will allow everyone who wants to come to Mass, and those who like, to receive holy Communion. Persons with health vulnerabilities are encouraged not to leave their vehicles.
- Persons who are sick *may not* attend public Mass. Those who are sneezing and coughing from allergies must either wear a mask or refrain from attending out of charity for others.

How:

- Only ~40 people will be allowed in the church for Masses, but we can allow everyone to come to the parking lot Mass. When in the church, parishioners must sit in household groups six feet from any other parishioner.

- Parishioners are strongly encouraged to wear masks (except during communion), to take their temperature before coming to make sure that it is below 100.4°, to wash or sanitize their hands before coming, and to practice excellent hygiene out of charity for others.
- We will need volunteers to sanitize the church after every Mass.

**These protocols are subject to change.*

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: If I don't feel comfortable coming back to Mass at St. Joseph's, and stay home instead, is that a sin?

Bishop Konderla has continued to suspended the obligation to attend Sunday Mass until further notice. You would not be in a state of mortal sin for missing Mass during this time.

Q: Do I have to wear a mask during Mass?

Priests, Deacons, and Extraordinary Minsters have been asked to wear a mask during the distribution of communion. Wearing a mask is recommended for parishioners, but not required.

Q: How will Holy Communion be distributed at St. Joseph's Masses?

For Outdoor Masses, Communion will be distributed from under the awning, and parishioners may approach from their vehicles, being careful to observe the six foot social distancing requirements between people of different households.

Inside the church, we will have one side of the church come up at a time to receive communion. Ushers will help direct parishioners from their pews, carefully observing six foot social distancing between households.

The Bishop recommends receiving communion in the hand, but it is the communicant's choice to receive on the tongue or in the hand. Those distributing are not to touch the communicant when distributing no matter how they receive, and all who are distributing Holy Communion will be wearing masks.

Q: Will there be enough seating for everyone who wants to come to St. Joseph's?

Masses inside the church will have a limited capacity of 40 people. (You may choose to attend the less crowded Wednesday evening Mass instead of Sunday Mass as long as the Bishop's dispensation from the Sunday Mass obligation remains in effect.)

Every other pew will be roped off, and parishioners must be seated so that we maintain a six foot separation between households. Please do not get upset if you are asked to sit someplace different from where you usually sit. The ushers will also dismiss people from Mass in an orderly way so that no crowds of people form in the church. All are encouraged to stand at least six feet away from people you don't live with.

Q. Can families sit together?

Yes. All those who live in the same house can sit together in a pew.

Q: Will there be hand sanitizer available?

Yes, but if you have your own, bring it. Please wash or sanitize your hands before and after Mass.

Q. Will the church be sanitized in between Masses? Yes.

Q. Will the doors be open at St. Joseph's?

The main doors of St. Joseph's will be propped open before and after Mass to limit cross-contamination from touching and so that we can count those entering.

Q. Will there be singing?

Yes, however, all the hymnals have been removed from the church so we will be singing either very familiar hymns or singing things responsorially.

Q. I'm a reader, server, or EMHC, will I be resuming my ministry at Mass?

No. Even though we are grateful for your service to St. Joseph's parish, for the time being, the Bishop has asked that we reduce the number of ministers to help prevent the possible spread of the virus. Betty Loney will let you know when we plan to resume the ministers schedule.

Q. Will there be holy water available?

Yes and no. The holy water fonts in the church will be empty but the holy water dispenser will be available for people to fill up their own holy water bottles, and the personal use of this sacramental is greatly encouraged.

Q. Will Confessions be available?

Confessions continue to be available before Mass on Sundays and Wednesdays.

Q: Will a collection be taken up during Mass?

No. A basket will be placed on the credence table near the entrance of the church and you may place your offering there, or you may continue to mail in your envelopes. The Bishop is encouraging parishioners to switch to online giving to reduce the possibility of contagion. If you are interested in setting this up, you may do so through the [Diocesan Online Giving Website](#).

Q. Will other St. Joseph parish groups and activities resume at this time?

No. The priority for re-opening is the celebration of the Eucharist. We hope to bring back social gatherings soon.

Q. How can I help?

There are several ways:

- Above all, please be charitable to your neighbors and patient with us. Everything about this is unprecedented and we are learning as we go.
- Please be curious to our ushers and follow their directions.
- When you come to Mass, please do not congregate in the aisles before or after Mass. Come in the doors, find a seat and stay there until Mass is over. Do not move from pew to pew.
- When Mass is over, be patient in leaving. Stay in your seat and offer a prayer of Thanksgiving for the gift of the Eucharist and allow others to leave so there's no crowding at the doors.
- Bring your own mask and hand sanitizer if you have it. That will allow us to use our supply of both for those who don't have them.
- If you're an usher and not in the at risk group, we'd like to have you serve please.

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