

Keeping Our Church Sacred and Safe

What to Know about Returning to Weekend Public Masses

Mass Obligation Dispensed & Live Streaming to Continue

For the foreseeable future, all people remain dispensed from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. The 4 p.m. Mass at Our Lady of Grace will continue to be live-streamed on the Our Lady of Grace & Saint Benedict websites.

Who Should Stay Home

For the safety and well-being of all, it is important that all persons in the vulnerable populations continue to stay home and attend Mass virtually. This includes the elderly, persons with chronic health problems, and those caring for someone in a vulnerable population. A gentle reminder, you will need to wear a mask for the duration of the celebration of the Mass. If health conditions prevent you from doing so, you are encouraged to stay home. It is okay to stay at home for the time being and is an expression of love for others. Most important, if you are sick, you should not attend public Mass.

Addressing Capacity Concerns

Due to the reduced seating capacity concerns, many questions have been raised about being turned away from Mass and why our parish is not asking Mass attendees to reserve their spot through a pre-registration process. After giving careful consideration to many options, it was chosen not to require a reservation for Mass, so as not to be exclusionary and frustrate people who were unaware of the requirement. At Saint Benedict we enjoy a sense of community. It is our hope that we will never need to turn anyone away from attending Mass. However, as we return it is hard to know how many will actually attend. We will monitor and assess the situation and, if necessary, adjust the Mass schedule.

Reminders When Coming to Mass

What To Do During Mass

- Remember to bring your mask
- Children under 2 years of age should not wear a mask
- Remember to bring your own hand sanitizer
- Please arrive at least 15 minutes early
- Please wash or sanitize your hands prior to entering the building
- Respect social distancing and spacing of 6 feet apart

- There are no worship aids or hymnals. We will use familiar and refrain - based songs to encourage participation
- Although you are wearing a mask, we encourage you to participate in the prayers and simple song
- The Sign of Peace will not include a handshake; you are asked to turn to the person next to you and offer a reverential bow
- The celebrant alone will receive Holy Communion at the proper time
- Mass attendees will receive Holy Communion after the final blessing

What To Do As You Arrive for Mass

What To Do For Communion & Dismissal

- Please follow the directions of the staff and volunteers
- The front doors of the church and those leading into the Nave will be propped open for you in order to limit the unnecessary touching of door handles
- We encourage you to be seated in the Nave of the Church first, followed by the narthex.
- Deposit your offertory in the marked baskets located in the narthex
- Every other pew has been roped off to avoid being seated directly behind another person
- For the health and well-being of others, please do not enter any roped off areas
- Members of the same household are permitted to sit together
- Mass attendees 2 years of age and older are required to wear a mask at all times, including during the communion procession

- The priest and all ministers will be wearing a mask when distributing Holy Communion
- The communion stations will remain at the same location
- Communion will only be distributed under the Sacred host
- You are to wear your mask during the communion procession
- As you approach the minister, fully extend your arms with hands open to receive the host
- The minister will also fully extend their arm in the process of distributing the host
- You are highly encouraged to receive communion in the hand
- After receiving the consecrated host, step aside, remove your mask, and consume the host
- Upon consuming the host, place your mask back on, and depart from the Church. Please do not return to your pew
- To maintain an orderly flow from the Church, all present are to come forward in the Communion procession, even if not receiving communion
- If you are not receiving communion when you come forward, please cross your arms across your chest as a sign of reverence, and continue the directional flow toward the exit
- There will be printed copies of the bulletin in narthex