



Resumption of Public Liturgies in the Time of Public Health Concern Sunday/Weekday Mass

*Directives and Guidelines for the
Diocese of Youngstown ~ May 2020*

In light of the decision to resume the celebration of public Masses and liturgies by the Bishops of Ohio, the following Directives and Guidelines are issued for all parishes of the Diocese of Youngstown. These take into consideration how to best proceed under these unusual circumstances while remaining pastorally sensitive to the People of God and adhering to restrictions issued by the State of Ohio. The guidance provided aims to clarify how such spiritual care can be responsibly offered to the faithful during this period and have been formulated with great care to preserve and respect the powerful liturgical and sacramental symbolism of the rites of the Mass. These directives/guidelines currently remain in effect by order of Bishop Murry and will be revised or changed should any further directives be issued by the Governor of Ohio, the Bishops of Ohio, or Bishop Murry. They are considered to be temporary until it is determined safe to return to the normal circumstances.

DISPENSATION FROM THE OBLIGATION TO ATTEND SUNDAY MASS

The Catholic faithful who reside in the Diocese of Youngstown and all other Catholics in the diocese and especially those who are sick, or at high risk of becoming sick continue to be dispensed from their Sunday obligation until further notice. The Easter Duty obligation is extended for a period of one year from the end of the Easter Season 2020.

➤ General Guidelines

1. Understanding the desire of many to return to church, it remains important for those who are at greater risk to refrain from returning until such time they feel comfortable and confident to do so.
2. Those who are symptomatic or who have been exposed to another with the virus within 14 days should not attend Mass in accordance with national, state and local health directives.
3. Parishes are encouraged to continue to live-stream Mass so that those unable to attend may maintain a spiritual connection with their local parish.
4. Appropriate cleaning of high use areas within the church is to be done before and after each service.
5. Every effort to ensure appropriate physical distancing before, during, and after liturgical celebrations is required. Methods will vary depending on capacity and arrangement of church buildings. Parishes will decide how best to configure seating to maintain proper physical distance.
6. Cry Rooms or enclosed spaces for families with small children are not available.