

QUICK GUIDE TO COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

January 11, 2021***

Masses/prayer activities

• All parishes must follow all diocesan protocols for public worship (see worship-related documents listed below).

This includes:

- Each parish must have a preparedness plan approved by the bishop before celebrating public Masses.
- Public Masses indoors must not exceed 50% of total capacity. The 250-person attendance cap on religious services has been lifted.
- Adoration in main body of church must follow the indoor limits listed above.
- Adoration in separate chapels is limited to 2 people.
- 24-hour (perpetual) adoration is allowed if it abides by the above regulations and a person is present.

Relevant worship-related document at www.stcdio.org/coronavirus-update.

- **July 31, 2020 – The Art of Reopening our Churches for Public Worship: Guidelines for WEDDINGS During COVID-19 (PDF)**
- **July 23, 2020 – AMENDED The Art of Reopening our Churches for Public Worship – Mass**

Parish programs/events/meetings outside of worship

Bishop Kettler has added the following requirements.

• **Faith formation, youth gatherings, retreats and related activities:** These types of events pose a greater risk of spreading COVID-19. From now until at least Feb. 1, these in-person gatherings must be suspended and shifted to online meetings or conducted at home.

• **Board and council meetings, social activities, organizational meetings, and related activities.** From now until until at least Feb. 1, these in-person gatherings must also be suspended and shifted to online meetings or conducted at home.

• **Drive-thru and take-out service** is permitted provided that parishes outline food preparation safety provisions in their parish preparedness plans. These plans must be submitted to, and be approved by, the bishop's office. Among provisions which must be included in the plans: 1) Parishes must provide the containers for take-out service to lessen the possibility of spreading the coronavirus, 2) food service workers must wear masks, 3) physical distancing must be observed, 4) hands must be sanitized regularly, and 5) a supervisor must be designated to ensure the provisions are followed. Submit plans for approval to Colleen in the bishop's office at chaider@gw.stcdio.org.

• **Choirs and vocal ensembles** may return to rehearsals beginning Jan. 18 under certain parameters (see document "Returning to Choir Rehearsals" at www.stcdio.org/

[coronavirus-update](#).) Additionally, protocols for small vocal ensembles to return to singing during Mass are currently being formulated with the intention of granting permission for groups of up to six vocalists to resume ministry beginning with the First Sunday of Lent. Congregational singing, however, is still not permitted. Also, choirs/ vocal ensembles are still not permitted to sing during any public event or liturgy until further notice.

Catholic schools

- Catholic schools will continue to follow present evaluation models and other strict protocols to determine when in-person and periods of distance-learning are most appropriate.

Questions?

A variety of COVID-19 resources and guidance can be found at <https://stcdio.org/coronavirus-update>. Or contact Joe Towalski, diocesan communications director (jtowalski@gw.stcdio.org; 320-258-7624), who will direct questions to the appropriate place.

**** The coronavirus pandemic continues to evolve. Guidelines/requirements in all of these areas may change on short notice. You will be notified when they do. Please ensure you are following the latest available guidelines/requirements.*