

Archdiocese of Baltimore
Guidelines for Responding to the COVID-19 Virus
May 14, 2020

To limit the amount of information being shared and to make this document as easy to read and helpful as possible, it will be limited to mostly updated/new information. Limited “repeat” information is included in italics. A comprehensive set of guidelines can be found at www.archbalt.org/coronavirus.

General

- A. **PHASE I GOES INTO EFFECT FRIDAY, MAY 15TH AT 5PM**, TO COINCIDE WITH THE START OF THE STATE’S STAGE 1. THE GUIDANCE PROVIDED EARLIER THIS WEEK APPLIES, INCLUDING THAT FACEMASKS ARE REQUIRED INSIDE THE CHURCH & THAT FUNERAL AND WEDDING MASSES REMAIN LIMITED TO 10 PEOPLE. NO OUTDOOR MASSES ARE AVAILABLE IN PHASE I AND HOME VISITS CONTINUE TO BE PROHIBITED IN PHASE I.
- B. **PHASE II WILL BEGIN MAY 30-31**, MEANING PUBLIC MASSES MAY BE OFFERED INDOORS OR OUTDOORS, AT THE PASTOR’S DISCRETION, AND WHERE IT IS PERMISSIBLE TO DO SO BASED ON CONDITIONS IN THE LOCAL JURISDICTION. INDOOR MASSES MAY BE PERMITTED WITH LIMITS ON CAPACITY (1/3 SEATING CAPACITY), OUTDOOR MASSES HAVE NO LIMIT ON NUMBERS IN ATTENDANCE BUT MUST ADHERE TO PHYSICAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS. NO IN-CAR MASSES WILL BE PERMITTED AND PARISHIONERS MUST BRING CHAIRS OR STAND. PASTORS WILL NEED TO DEVELOP A PROCESS FOR DISTRIBUTING COMMUNION BASED ON THE GUIDELINES ISSUED IN PHASE I. IN ADDITION, A LIST OF REQUIRED ITEMS AND CONSIDERATIONS (ENCLOSED) MUST BE MET FOR PASTORS TO CERTIFY THAT HIS PARISH IS PREPARED TO OFFER MASSES. MASSES SHOULD NOT RESUME AT YOUR PARISH UNLESS ALL CONDITIONS ARE MET.
- C. **CLARIFICATION TO PHASE I GUIDANCE RE: DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION ON THE TONGUE. IT SHOULD READ:**
PAGE 7, #9 “HOWEVER, IT IS STRONGLY SUGGESTED THAT COMMUNICANTS RECEIVE IN THE HAND. IF THE PRIEST OR COMMUNION MINISTER SENSES THAT HIS/HER FINGERS HAVE MADE CONTACT WITH A PERSON, HE/SHE SHOULD PAUSE, PLACE THE CIBORIUM ON THE CORPORAL, AND USE HAND SANITIZER. EVEN IF, WHILE DISTRIBUTING COMMUNION TO SOMEONE WHO RECEIVES ON THE TONGUE, THE MINISTER DOES NOT COME IN CONTACT WITH THE COMMUNICANT’S TONGUE, THE MINISTER MUST PERFORM HAND HYGIENE BEFORE DISTRIBUTING COMMUNION TO THE NEXT COMMUNICANT. THE MINISTER

REPEATS THIS PROCESS AS OFTEN IS NECESSARY DURING THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION. IT IS NOT NECESSARY, HOWEVER, FOR THE COMMUNION MINISTER TO USE HAND SANITIZER BETWEEN EACH COMMUNICANT WHO RECEIVES IN THE HAND, UNLESS THE MINISTER MAKES ACTUAL CONTACT.”

Communication

- A. The Division of Information Technology is on hand to assist parishes with any technology initiatives. Please call or email the helpdesk at 410-547-5305 opt 1 or helpdesk@archbalt.org. Some recent projects that IT has implemented or assisted parishes with include technology infrastructure reviews, server replacement with an inexpensive alternative, desktop upgrades for Windows 10, Office 365 email migration, Wifi installation and expansion, replacement of phone system with VOIP solution, and hardware / software for live streaming of Mass.
- B. *Repeat information: A page on the archdiocesan website has been established where all pastoral resources will be kept: <https://www.archbalt.org/pastoralresources/>*
- C. *Repeat information: There is one central contact for the Archdiocese for all questions, concerns and reports involving the COVID-19 virus: riskmanagement@archbalt.org. As more information becomes available and as we learn of other questions or concerns more updates will be forthcoming. Updates will also be posted to <https://www.archbalt.org/coronavirus/>, where you can refer parishioners and others for the latest information and news.*