



Office of the Bishop

Roman Catholic Diocese of Lubbock

June 7, 2021

After consultation with the Presbyterate of the Diocese of Lubbock at our annual Assembly last week, I issue the following adjustments to our COVID-19 protocols. The adjustment is needed as further and conflicting information is received from the national experts, and as the conditions of the pandemic change and immunity grows throughout the 25 counties of the Diocese. As has been the case for a number of months now, Pastors may impose stricter requirements than these new protocols allow, should the individual parish situations warrant stricter measures than what is now being allowed. I will support any such decision for greater restrictions which a Pastor deems appropriate. MEASURES OF A MORE LAX NATURE ARE NOT ALLOWED AT INDIVIDUAL DISCRETION UNLESS EXPLICITLY PERMITTED BY THE OFFICE OF THE BISHOP.

THE DISPENSATION FROM THE OBLIGATION TO ATTEND MASS ON SUNDAYS AND HOLY DAYS REMAINS DISPENSED IN THE DIOCESE OF LUBBOCK UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.

Masks are no longer required, and parishes are no longer mandated to post signage requesting that masks be worn. Please do not hassle people who choose not to wear masks. I recommend that parish staff members continue to wear masks around parish property, at times in the Church's liturgical celebrations when close contact is needed (e.g. processions, administering individual Sacraments, etc.). All Ministers of Communion **MUST** continue to wear masks for now, and practice visible hand sanitizing.

Funeral Rites may now be conducted inside local funeral homes, as long as our Clergy feel comfortable doing so. No one is mandated to conduct services in a funeral home setting if they deem it an unsafe environment for doing so.

Missalettes and hymn books may now be used in parishes of the Diocese. If such books are subject to multiple use in a short period of time, it is recommended that at least some wiping of the books be done for sanitizing purposes.

The Sign of Peace may be offered at Masses in the Diocese of Lubbock, but with the stipulation that there be no physical contact except among members of household units.

Processions with the Gifts may take place. This might not be feasible in parishes which do not use long-handled offertory baskets. Also, the elements to be consecrated should remain covered until they are placed on the altar.

Below is a summary of COVID-19 protocols still in place in the Diocese of Lubbock as of June 1, 2021:

Most Reverend Robert M. Coerver, Bishop of Lubbock

- Frequent hand washing and availability of hand sanitizer, and sanitary wipes as needed
- No Communion from the Cup
- Encouragement of Communion in the Hand
- No Holy Water in churches
- Confessions are to be heard in well ventilated spaces which allow for both distancing and privacy
- Parish offices may be opened at the discretion of the Pastor
- Parish facilities still may NOT be rented out; at this time there is no timetable to allow such rentals to occur
- Thorough sanitizing of all contact surfaces is still advisable
- All Faithful in the Diocese of Lubbock are dispensed from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days until further notice

+ Robert M. Coerver

Most Reverend Robert M. Coerver
Bishop of Lubbock