

COVID-19 Preparedness Plan for St. Mary of the Lake: Church Building

Executive Order 20-40, issued by Governor Tim Walz on April 23, 2020, requires each business in operation during the peacetime emergency establish a “COVID-19 Preparedness Plan.” A business’s COVID-19 Preparedness Plan shall establish and explain the necessary policies, practices and conditions to meet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) guidelines for COVID-19 and federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards related to worker exposure to COVID-19. St. Mary of the Lake Catholic Church has developed this plan for the church building in response to the Governor’s Executive Order. This Preparedness Plan for the church building should be read in coordination with the Preparedness Plan for the St. Mary of the Lake Parish Life Center.

During this time, the obligation to attend Sunday Mass continues to be lifted by Archbishop Hebda.

We will livestream and post our weekend Mass. To protect people’s health and well-being, we encourage people in vulnerable categories to participate in Mass via livestream.

For public Masses, we have adopted the following procedures:

- We are following the liturgical procedures as put forth in memos from Fr. Tom Margevicius, Director of Worship for the Archdiocese, on May 8 and May 26, 2020 (Phase II) and any later directives such as on 9/4/2020.
- Attendance at Mass on Sundays is by sign-up only.
- Attendance at Mass on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday is open to all.
- Guidelines for people who desire to attend Mass in person are posted on the parish website according to the following questions:
 1. Do you have a cough, fever, chills, body aches, loss of smell or taste?
 2. Have you been exposed to anyone who is ill or showing COVID-19 symptoms?
 3. Have you recently been out of the country?
 4. I understand that if I am 65 or older or if I have preexisting conditions, I should avoid public gatherings, including church.

Those who attend Mass in person are required to observe the following procedures at the church building:

1. You will bring and wear a mask
2. You will enter through the parking lot doors.
3. You will sanitize your hands when you enter.
4. You will be ushered to an assigned seat.
5. You will remain in your seat until you are excused after Mass.
6. Congregational singing is not allowed.
7. All auxiliary spaces at church are closed, including the main restrooms (a handicap accessible emergency bathroom is available in the Bride's Room).
8. You must be able to remain seated in an assigned pew and wear a mask for the entire Mass.
9. You will practice social distancing outside and inside the church.
10. By attending Mass, you confirm that you are not ill and have not had direct contact with anyone with COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms.

We have adopted the following safety protocols at the church:

- The Baptismal font will remain covered and no holy water fonts will be filled.
- No literature will be available in the Gathering Space.
- Music books have been removed from the pews.
- No congregational singing is permitted at public Masses.
- People are requested to not light candles.
- No collection basket will be passed during the liturgy. A collection basket or other container will be available in the Gathering Space for gifts.
- We have 17 socially-distanced spots available in the church. The total number of people attending will be 6 persons of the same household per spot. We reserve the right to limit attendance to a smaller number of people at some Masses.
- Guests should remain in their pew during the entire liturgy.
- No bathrooms will be available except for emergency situations. The Bride's Room bathroom will be used for that purpose.
- For the reception of Holy Communion:
 - Holy Communion will be brought to the people in their pew.
 - Eucharistic Ministers will sanitize their hands before Holy Communion.

- Eucharistic Ministers will wear masks while distributing Holy Communion.
 - Guests will sanitize their hands before receiving Holy Communion. They should wear their masks until the Eucharistic Minister has passed, consume the host, then put their masks back on.
 - Holy Communion will only be received in the hand.
 - Should someone request the reception of Holy Communion on the tongue, the Eucharistic Minister will either give that person Holy Communion and immediately sanitize their hands or give that person Holy Communion after distributing to everyone else and then immediately sanitize their hands.
 - Eucharistic Ministers will sanitize their hands after distributing Holy Communion.
- After Mass people will be asked to leave the church immediately and according to social distancing guidelines.
 - Guests will be asked not to socialize in the church, the Gathering Space or the parking lot.
 - After Mass, the church will be sanitized.

Baptisms

- Only one baptism will take place per baptism time.
- Fresh water will be used for the baptism.
- Those attending the baptism who are over two years of age must wear a mask.

Weddings and Funerals

- Weddings and funerals will generally follow the guidelines for the public Masses. However, funerals are now private.

Confessions

- Confessions will continue to take place outside in the church parking lot at 9:00 AM on Saturdays.

Sacrament of the Sick

- Requests will be handled on a case by case basis by the pastor.