

Return to Church

This weekend, we will finally gather for Mass together again. However, to protect everyone's health and well-being, things will be different from before the pandemic. Please read on so you know what to expect and how we will keep each other safe.

A Note about Safety

There is a higher risk of getting COVID-19 at a public gathering. By coming to Mass you accept that higher risk. We are doing what we are told minimizes that added risk, but if you are in a more vulnerable group, consider staying home for now. All Catholics in the Archdiocese of Dubuque are still dispensed from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass. We will continue to live stream the 4:15 Saturday Mass at St. Columbkille on our website and YouTube channel.

A Need for Ministers

We can only provide Masses if we have volunteers to usher, distribute Eucharist, and most of all clean the pews afterward. Neither staff, committees, nor attendees should feel pressured to be in ministry beyond personal comfort level. We need willing, not forced ministers. If you want to help, please let us know by calling the Parish Office at 563-588-1433 or indicating when you sign up for Mass.

What to Expect

Signing Up for Masses

You will need to sign up to attend one of the four weekend Masses OR one of the Tuesday-Friday Masses. Safe social distancing guidelines mean we only have space for a limited number of people. We need you to sign up so we don't have to send people away, and can provide the ministries to have Mass safely.

We'll share a new online sign-up on the website and Facebook each week. If you don't have internet access, call the office at 563-588-1433 and Donna will sign you up. There are slots for 70 households. When you sign up, be sure to tell us how many from your household will attend. If more than six people in your household will attend, please use a second slot. The first sign-up will go live at Noon tomorrow, May 27. It will be on a first come, first served basis. So make sure you plan ahead.

Tentative Mass Schedule

Please know that Mass times are subject to change as we find out what Masses have enough ministers, and which draw attendance. If we don't get enough ministers, Mass will not happen. Check the website often for the latest updates. Here is the current plan for Mass times:

- **Saturday:** 5:00pm
- **Sunday:** 7:00am, 9:00am, 11:00am
- **Tuesday-Friday:** 5:30pm
- **Monday:** No Mass

Face Masks

When you arrive at Mass, you will put on your face mask while still in your car. We are asking that everyone over the age of 2 wears a mask. We won't have any to hand out, so be sure you have your mask ready before leaving for Mass. For the well-being of all, please refrain from coming to Mass these first couple of weekends if you must bring a child 2 years old or younger.

Entering the Church

You'll get out of your car and come to the main entrance leaving a 6-foot space between you and anyone who's not part of your household. You'll sanitize your hands and come through the doors where a hospitality minister will show you to your seat down one-direction aisles. We need volunteers for seating people.

Seating

There will only be seating for approximately 90 individuals. There may be more as households may sit together. You probably won't be sitting in your usual spot. Remember to practice safe social distancing and keep a distance of at least 6 feet between you and anyone not in your household.

During Mass

For the first few weeks, we will not do any singing. There will be no collection, but you can leave your offering in a basket at the Information Station. There will be no procession of gifts, holding hands at the Our Father, and no "physical" Sign of Peace except for those in your immediate household if you wish.



Communion

We will be learning new Communion patterns to facilitate social distancing. We ask that everyone receives the Eucharist in the hand. Father Tom asks that you practice holding your hands to receive Eucharist and correct bad habits! Place one hand on top of the other at shirt-pocket height. Curl the tips of your fingers slightly if at all to form a saucer. Because ministers can't make physical contact, they won't hand Communion to you, so please do not have your hands curled up. Communion from the cup remains suspended.

To keep ministers from being a common contact point between gatherings, a few can't be doing it all. This goes for priests especially. The priests hope to not distribute Communion at any Mass to lower the risk of transmission.

Leaving the Church

You will be dismissed after Mass by the hospitality ministers who brought you in. We will need volunteers to wipe down pews after each Mass to prepare for the next.

Confessions

For everyone's safety, the Sacrament of Reconciliation remains by appointment only. Please note that Father Tom and Father Paul will NOT hear confessions just before Mass. To make an appointment, call the Parish Office at 563-588-1433.

Thank You

We know how difficult this is. It isn't the way that any of us want, but it is the way it will need to be to ensure your well-being.

Catholic Christianity is grounded in how we are saved by Christ in the midst of community. Community needs us to attend to the safety of each other. So please wear a Mask; keep distance in the parking lot, at doors, in aisles; listen to the ushers; use sanitizer; and remember that we're all in this together!

FATHER TOM

Thank you all for your cooperation and patience.

