

# Welcoming Back Parishioners

This week's parish engagement tip are the best practices for welcoming back parishioners to Mass based on feedback we have received from other parishes that have already resumed Masses on other parts of the Country.

Planning appropriately, as advised by Archbishop Wenski and the Federation of Diocesan Commission, is of utmost importance. Many of you have been ready with a plan, have already planned for hand sanitizers and cleaning supplies, staff and volunteers know their responsibilities, and technology is ready. However, below please find some suggestions given to us from parishes that have resumed Masses already so that we can learn from their experiences:

## **Communicate- Communication is KEY!**

- Be sure to also communicate with specific groups, e.g., the Parish Council, liturgical ministers, school parents, senior citizen groups, nursing home residents, youth groups, etc. This allows each parishioner to take ownership of the endeavor and to feel like they are part of the effort to keep everyone safe
  - Post welcoming message on parish website with specific guidelines for your parish.
  - Send emails to parishioners Welcoming them back to Masses and outlining guidelines
  - Send text communication with mass schedule and refer to webpage for guidelines

## **Use technology to assist with Liturgy**

- Communicate to your parishioners how to download different apps for missals such as Breviary, USCCB readings, Ordo Mobile, etc. Place links on your parish mobile app and webpage.
- Place music for mass on parish webpage and mobile app.
- Continue to offer virtual Masses for those who are still unable to leave their home or are afraid to do so.
- Use projectors for liturgy and music.

## **Welcome/Hospitality Committee**

Maintaining social distancing will be a primary focus. These arrangements will take some time getting used to. Ushers will need assistance in directing the parishioners and in making sure that there is no congregation before or after mass.

- Have a Welcome Table to assist in answering questions making sure to keep the 6" of social distance requirement
- Recruit Ushers from the Welcome committee
  - Have them assist the Ushers
    - with parishioners while they are waiting to be seated,
    - the overflow of the parish in a welcoming manner
    - the exiting of the mass
- Post all your Welcome banners inside and outside the parish

## **Ministries**

- Consider having Ministry Masses during the week in order to alleviate the Sunday Masses

- Use Ministries heads as first line of communication, keep them abreast of the needs of the parish during this time of re-opening. Ask for assistance. They want to help.

I hope this helps. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at any time.

