

UPDATED FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR RETURNING TO MASS IN CHURCH

What times are the Masses and how many parishioners can attend?

Beginning June 14, Sunday Masses will be at 8am and 11am. The hope is to add a Saturday Vigil Mass at 4:30pm back on the schedule. This depends on how well the initial phase progresses. By the fall it is hoped that additional Masses will be added. The capacity for each Mass is 100 people. Beginning June 22 we will resume weekday Masses at 9am Monday – Friday. On Saturday our 12 noon live-streamed Mass will continue (no public Mass).

How do I sign up for a Mass?

On the Wednesday prior to Sunday Masses you can sign up by going to our website at stmarybethel.org and clicking on the link. Those who do not have access to a computer or internet device are asked to call the Parish Office on the Wednesday prior to Sunday Masses between 10am and 2pm. Mass reservations are on a first-come-first-serve basis. Please sign up for one Mass only. If you have a reservation for a Mass and find you cannot attend, please let us know so the spot can be opened up for someone else.

What if the reservations are full and I cannot get a seat?

Beginning Sunday, June 14, the 8am & 11am public Masses will be live-streamed. The obligation for Mass is still lifted during this time. To view the Masses go to stmarybethel.org or <https://www.facebook.com/StMaryChurchBethel/>.

What time should I arrive for Mass.

The doors of the Church will be opened 30 minutes prior to the Mass time for check-in as you enter the parking lot and as you enter the Church.

What safety requirements are there for parishioners to follow?

All Mass attendees must wear a face covering that needs to be worn from the time you exit your vehicle to the time you return to your vehicle. The face covering can be partially removed only when you receive Communion. (Medical reason for not wearing a mask must be communicated to us prior to your attending Mass.) For those with young children under the age of 6, parents will need to make their own decision if their child/children need to wear a mask.

Signs will be posted near all entry and exit areas clearly explaining that masks and social distancing are required. *Anyone who is not feeling well, has a cough or fever or has recently been around COVID-19, flu, colds or any other virus or bacterial infection should not attend Mass.* As previously stated, the dispensation for Sunday and Holy Day obligation is still in affect.

Will there be social distancing in the Church and how will I know where to sit?

Strict social distancing of at least 6 feet must be maintained at all times with anyone outside of a person's immediate household. This must be maintained from the time a you and your family leave your car until the time you return. Please follow all social distancing markers inside and outside of the Church. A volunteer will show you to your pew and all pews will be marked. Once seated,

please do not change your seat.

At the end of Mass a volunteer will dismiss the congregation pew by pew, beginning at the rear of the Church and ending at the front of the church. Please go directly to your car. Gathering in fellowship/groups will not be allowed

How will I receive Holy Communion?

For the duration of the pandemic, we are asking that the faithful receive Communion in the hand only. We ask that you wear a face mask that has loops that extend over the ears, allowing one side to be loosened without the need for a complete removal of the mask. In order to minimize the possibility of contact with droplets between the communicant and minister, each communicant will come forward and while retaining his or her face mask and standing in front of the minister, receive the consecrated Host from the minister:

- While retaining a face mask, each communicant will be asked to stop six feet in front of the minister before coming forward to receive the Eucharist.
- While the communicant retains his or her mask, the minister will say "Body of Christ" and the communicant will respond "Amen".
- The communicant will step aside, remove one side of their mask, consume the consecrated Host and return to their seat.

Social distancing rules must be observed during the procession to and from a communicant's seat.

What other changes might we see during this time?

To adhere to the CDC requirements and those from the Diocese there are many guidelines in place to protect the health of our parishioners and clergy. Among them are:

- All hymnals and missalettes will be removed from the pews and stored for the duration of the pandemic. No other materials may be left in pews. There will be no printed bulletins during this time. (The bulletin can be accessed on our website.) There will also be no materials in the vestibule.
- The holy water fonts will remain empty.
- The Processions of Gifts are suspended until further notice.
- Because of the greater risk of spreading the virus, singing by the assembly is suspended until further notice.
- Restrooms are for emergency purposes only. Only 1 person at a time may occupy the restroom. A sign will be on the door with the procedures that must be followed when using the facility.
- The Children's Room (Cry Room) and the Parish hall will be unavailable for use.
- The faithful will not hold hands during the Lord's Prayer and the physical sign of the peace is omitted.

- Collection baskets will be placed at the doors of the Church.
- Parish staff and volunteers will wear face masks at all times.

You may access the **Plan for Resumption of Indoor Mass** in further detail by going to our website and clicking on the link. If you do not have access to a computer or internet you can call the office to request a copy.

Disclaimer

St. Mary Parish Bethel CT has taken appropriate precautions in light of the CDC and Governor Lamont's recommendations regarding public gatherings in light of the possible transmission of the coronavirus. However, despite these precautions, it is possible that transmission of the virus is still possible due to the public nature of the service and the unknowns with how the virus may be transmitted. By registering for this service, participating in the Mass, and opting to receive Holy Communion, you acknowledge and understand that you are assuming a risk of transmission and will release St. Mary Parish or any clergy involved in the service from any responsibility should you contract the virus in the future.

By signing up to attend the parish service, you recognize the obligation to (i) wear a mask or face covering when required; (ii) adhere to all required direction regarding social distance spacing when participating in the service and (iii) not attend service if you are sick, experiencing any symptoms consistent with the coronavirus, or are otherwise required to be quarantined."