

# Returning to Mass

The time has come when we can return to our churches for Mass. This is wonderful news and I want to ask your help so that we do it safely and with the dignity it deserves. Before I write anything else I need to remind everyone that this does not mean that corona virus is over. It is still with us and threatens our lives. So if you are at risk because of your age or any health conditions (e.g. pulmonary, heart, diabetes) that render you susceptible, you may be wise to stay at home at this time. You are not obligated to attend Mass as long as the pandemic is active and people are at risk. I know how much our people want to return and have communion but please be careful if you choose to do so.

I compiled a list of do's and don'ts from those given to us by Governor Baker and the Archdiocese of Boston to allow safe ways for us to worship during this phase of recovery. I put them into the form of what I am calling my Ten COVID Commandments to make it a little easier and maybe less scary for people to follow.



## The Ten *COVID* Commandments

**1. Thou shalt not endanger thyself or someone else.**..by going to Mass if you are ill or if you are vulnerable to the corona virus. The Mass obligation is suspended at this time. We will continue to live stream and post Mass daily at 9:00 and Sundays at 10 AM.

**2. Thou shalt call or sign up soon and come early.** We need to know you are coming to Mass. Spaces are limited. You can call 9:30 -11:30 am, Tuesday-Friday, leave a message, or at register on our website! We will follow usual Mass times but there will be NO mass at 5 PM on Sunday for now. Come early to allow time to be seated.

**3. Thou shalt wear a face mask.** You will not be able to be admitted to church without a mask, except for children or adults who cannot wear masks. I know this is uncomfortable but required of us to stay safe.

**4. Thou shalt keep a distance of six feet.** You must not stand or sit closer than six feet away to others, even when going to communion or leaving the church.

**5. Thou shalt wash thy hands** or use a disinfectant when you use any facilities.

**6. Thou shalt not sing or give sign of peace.** This is really hard for us who love to sing and cannot wait to praise the Lord in song! We will have some music provided with instrument and cantor. For those perhaps you can hum.

**7. Thou shalt receive communion in thy hand only.** When the priest or deacon comes to you, put your palm open and flat so that he does not touch you. Then remove your mask and receive the host. And place your mask over your face again.

**8. Thou shalt not congregate with others** before or after Mass except at six feet away. Families who live together may remain close during and after Mass.

**9. Thou shalt take everything with thee.** When you enter may take and keep a hymnal so you follow the readings, and take a bulletins when you leave. But do not leave anything in the pews that others may touch and become infected.

**10. Thou shalt be joyful!** It is a season of joy in the risen Lord. You are alive and well. Be patient and be cooperative. We know it is uncomfortable and we miss greeting others and singing. But let's enjoy seeing each other and being with the Lord and receiving his body in communion.

**Again,** please call the parish or sign up at our website to let us know if you are coming!

God bless!

*Fr. John*