

Re-Gathering – Phase One

COVID-19 Cleaning Requirements

Re-gathering our people requires parishes to practice social distancing and disinfecting to reduce our risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Every parish should contact their normal cleaning products supplier to see what disinfecting products they have available that are approved against COVID-19. Some of these products are still reserved for medical facilities and can be in short supply. Read the directions for use on the container. Many products require an application, and then allowing the product to remain on the surface for 10 minutes before wiping off, to be effective.

Cleaning and disinfecting public spaces including your Church:

- Develop, implement and maintain a cleaning plan to be used each week and after any positive COVID test.
- Frequently touched surfaces like pew seats and pew backs, light switches toilets, faucets, sinks and door handles will need to be cleaned and then disinfected to reduce the risk of germs on surfaces and objects.
- Disinfection using EPA approved disinfectants against COVID-19 reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19. Frequent disinfection of surfaces and objects touched by multiple people is important. Disinfectants kill germs on surfaces. By killing germs on a surface after cleaning, you can lower the risk of spreading infection.
- If an EPA-approved disinfectant is unavailable, you can use 1/3 cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water, or 70% alcohol solutions to disinfect. Do not mix bleach or other cleaning and disinfection products together.
- Coronaviruses on surfaces and objects naturally die within hours to days. Warmer temperatures and exposure to sunlight will reduce the time the virus survives on surfaces and objects.
- Normal routine cleaning with soap and water removes germs and dirt from surfaces. It lowers the risk of spreading COVID-19 infection.

Always wear gloves appropriate for the chemicals being used when you are cleaning and disinfecting. Additional personal protective equipment (PPE) may be needed based on the product you are using.

Consider what items can be moved or removed completely from the Church to reduce frequent handling or contact from multiple people. Soft and porous materials, such as books and chairs, should be removed or stored to reduce the challenges with cleaning and disinfecting them.

For parishes with upholstered pews, it is recommended that the upholstery be steam-cleaned initially. After that process, a sanitizing spray can be used following each Mass (drying time of ten minutes is sufficient). For information in this regard, contact Sr. Jude or Norm Bormann.

If your Church has been unoccupied for 7 days or more, it will only need your normal routine cleaning to reopen the area. This is because the virus that causes COVID-19 has not been shown to survive on surfaces longer than this time. Most of our churches, however, have been open daily to some extent during the last few weeks and will then need to be disinfected.

In addition:

Leaving some doors open reduces the need for touching of handles by multiple people. Opening windows or doors to improve ventilation, and setting HVAC systems to use more outside air may also help prevent the spread.

Practice social distancing, wear facial coverings, and follow proper prevention hygiene, such as washing your hands frequently and using alcohol-based (at least 60% alcohol) hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available.

Practice disinfecting the church to determine how much time will be required for disinfecting between services.

Please contact Norm Bormann to request clarification or assistance.

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