

The Diocese of Southern Ohio

Guidelines for Holy Communion, Confirmations and Receptions

effective October 18, 2020



Bishop Breidenthal has authorized the reinstatement of Holy Communion, confirmations and reception commencing on Sunday, October 18, 2020 throughout the Diocese of Southern Ohio pursuant to the following guidelines:

Holy Communion

The service of Holy Communion shall follow the order of service for Holy Eucharist as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer with the following adjustments:

- The celebrant shall remain masked and use hand sanitizer throughout the celebration of the Eucharist and especially before the distribution of the consecrated bread.
- A small amount of wine shall be poured into the chalice for the consumption of the celebrant only. No consecrated wine will be distributed to the congregation at this time.
- The priest host can be touched, broken and consumed only by the celebrant. It may not be added to the consecrated bread to be distributed.
- The celebrant shall consecrate the bread by holding hands above the paten (no touch).
- Before the distribution of the consecrated bread to the congregation, the celebrant will again use hand sanitizer.
- The congregation will be invited to come to the celebrant, maintaining social distancing with masks on. The celebrant shall drop a piece of the consecrated bread in the hand of the communicant so as to not touch the communicant's hands. Without consuming or removing the mask, the communicant shall immediately return to their seat where they may lift their mask and consume the bread.

The role of the deacon in the celebration of the Eucharist will continue as liturgically appropriate, including the setting of the table and the distribution of the consecrated bread according to the above protocol.

Altar Guild

Instructions to the Altar Guild shall include that they sanitize their hands and try to avoid touching the priest host or the communion bread. If wafers are used, they should remain in the sealed sleeve for opening by the celebrant only after hand sanitizer has been used. The remaining consecrated wafers after communion should be disposed of properly.

Confirmation and Reception

If confirmations or receptions will be desired during an episcopal visitation, this should be communicated to the diocesan office in a timely manner. Contact Ann Sabo at asabo@diosohio.org. Once the diocesan office is informed of the people to be confirmed or received, appropriate certificates will be sent to be filled out in advance by the church. The bishop will arrive early enough to sanitize his or her hands and sign them and they should be placed on a table to be picked up after the service.

Confirmations

- Confirmands and their party shall sit together, masked and maintaining social distance throughout the church.
- At the appropriate time each confirmand shall be presented by name while remaining in place with their presenters.
- When invited, the confirmand will come forward alone, still masked, before the bishop.
- The bishop will have sanitized his/her hands before each person comes forward and will lay hands on the head of the confirmand.
- This procedure will be repeated until all confirmands have been confirmed.

Capacity for guests

Should there be more people to be presented than can safely be in socialized groups in the church, please contact the bishop and work out with him or her the best way to make sure everyone is able to be confirmed or received.

Depending on the number of people being presented, the host priest will need to decide how many other congregants will be able to attend and still maintain social distance. The service should be broadcast if that is the normal custom.



Receptions

- When all have been confirmed, if there are people to be received each shall be presented by name while remaining in place with their presenters.
- When invited, the person being received will come forward alone and, still, masked stand before the bishop.
- The bishop will look directly at the person being received and pronounce the words of reception. There will be no direct contact.

Reaffirmations

- After all the confirmations and receptions, the bishop will invite any wishing to reaffirm their vows to come forward and stand socially distanced apart, and the bishop will recognize their reaffirmation as a group.

Resources

Visit <https://episcopaliansinconnection.org/doing-church-during-covid-19/> for additional guidelines on safe worship practices during the pandemic.

As always, these guidelines are contingent on the current health advisory levels for your county. To see your current alert level, visit <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/public-health-advisory-system/>.