



DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH

MEMORANDUM

To: Priests, Deacons, Parish Staff, Catholic Center
From: Very Reverend Jonathan Wallis, STL *JW*
Date: September 11, 2020
Subject: Guidelines for Parish Gatherings Outside of Mass

After consulting medical professionals, staff and the Deans of the seven deaneries, Bishop Olson is sending the following “Guidelines for Parish Gatherings Outside of Mass.”

The guidelines are intended to apply to various types of gatherings and meetings with no changes to current Mass protocols.

Guidelines for Parish Gatherings Outside of Mass

In-person meetings are authorized at parishes according to the following guidelines:

1. Room Capacity: please use the following formula
 - a. Total Square Feet
 - b. Divide by 36 (6 square feet per person)
 - c. Sum given is total capacity number
 - d. Room should be arranged to maintain 6 square feet per person
 - e. If persons of the same household are seated closer together, total occupancy is not to exceed the room capacity.

2. Meeting Guidelines
 - a. Room should be sanitized before and after each event
 - b. All participants should:
 - i. Sanitize hands by washing with soap and water (preferred) and/or alcohol-based hand sanitizers;
 - ii. Wear masks at all times;
 - iii. Maintain social distancing.

3. Retreats
 - a. No overnight retreats;
 - b. ACTS and CHRP Retreats are suspended for Fall 2020;
 - c. Day Retreats for adults and Sacramental preparation retreats held at parishes under the meeting guidelines are authorized; Parishes are asked to not have day retreats until November 1, 2020.

4. Child Care Programs
 - a. Pre-School Programs
 - i. Allowed;
 - ii. Please submit program protocols to Nancy Eder, RN.
 - b. Mother's Day Out Programs: suspended for Fall 2020
 - c. Parish Nurseries: suspended for Fall 2020.

5. Parish Festivals
 - a. For festivals held during Fall 2020: Please focus on drive-through activities:
 - i. Food delivered to people in cars;
 - ii. No walk-up delivery;
 - iii. Frequent hand-washing and hand sanitizing;
 - iv. All wear masks;
 - v. Maintain social distancing.
 - b. No outdoor gatherings;
 - c. Please submit plans to Nancy Eder, RN.

6. Religious Education
 - a. Religious Education for K-12: Remote for Fall 2020;

- b. Adult Religious Education: All activities follow meeting guidelines;
 - c. Family Catechesis: Remote with in-person parent meetings according to the meeting guidelines.
7. Sacramental Preparation
- a. K-12: Remote for Fall 2020;
 - b. Sacramental preparation that involves only adults: Follow meeting guidelines;
 - c. RCIA Adapted for Children: in-person allowed only with parents present with children and following meeting guidelines.
8. Youth Groups and Discipleship Groups
- a. The parish must have a dedicated space exclusive for the youth; or a space that can be set apart ONLY for the youth group/discipleship group gatherings
 - b. Follow guidelines for Room Capacity and Meetings
 - c. No communal objects are to be used at the gathering (missals/bibles/pens, etc.; handouts may be provided only by the YM leader)
 - d. No food or drink should be provided for the group (students may bring their own bottles but should not share their items with others)
 - e. All Safe Environment guidelines must be followed
 - f. All Youth Ministry guidelines must be followed à visit <https://fwdioc.org/youth-ministry-guidelines> for more information
 - g. Youth Groups are asked to not begin in-person meetings before October 1, 2020.
 - h. Discipleship Groups that have been meeting are free to continue. Those that have not yet started are asked to begin on or after October 1, 2020.