

Celebrating a Funeral Mass During the Pandemic

Vigil

- Contact the funeral home prior to the vigil; and follow any guidelines that are set.
- Wear a mask (and gloves if needed).
- The CDC has noted that at this time there is no known risk attending a funeral of a person that has died from the virus, however one should refrain from touching the body.
- Comfort family members and friends from a safe distance.
- Feel free to pray the Rosary, read Scripture, etc., but from a safe distance.
- If the vigil is prior to the funeral Mass, do not ride in the same car as the funeral director or family to the church.

Mass

- It is important to follow the guidelines concerning the celebration of Mass set out by the Diocese of Columbus.
- Attendees who do not live in the same household should stay at least 6 feet apart and wear a cloth face covering when interacting with people who do not live in their household.
- People who have been living in the same household can comfort each other in typical ways such as hugging, holding hands, and sitting next to each other.
- Attendees should nod, bow, or wave instead of holding or shaking hands, hugging, or kissing anyone who does not live in their household.
- Attendees should sit in the designated pews so as to social distance.
- For the reception of the body, it is best to have the immediate family in the church with others outside.
- Funeral directors, with gloves, should place the funeral pall on the casket.
- If cremated remains are present at the Mass, allow the funeral director to place the urn on a table.
- One lector should be chosen to read both readings.
- Cantor should remain in the choir loft or at the cantor stand.
- If incense will be used, the celebrant should handle the thurible and the boat.
- The celebrant should be the only one distributing Holy Communion.
- If receiving Holy Communion, attendees need to lower their masks and remove gloves.

Committal

- Leave the church in an orderly manner as to not violate the 6 feet social distancing between families.
- On the way to the cemetery, do not share a vehicle with anyone.
- While it is customary for the clergy to ride with the funeral director to the cemetery, it is best if he drives himself.
- Once at the cemetery, the committal should take place outside (near the gravesite) as many chapels cannot accommodate the social distancing guidelines.
- Military honors can take place as long as social distancing is maintained.

