



OFFICE OF THE PASTOR

...With God, all things are possible! Matt 19:26

St. Rita in the Desert Phase II Guidelines

While we continue to monitor the Covid-19 outbreaks within Pima County and the outlying areas, we are pleased to report that the data related to, a decrease in positivity rates, the spread of the virus, and hospitalizations are good news. Therefore, we feel that we can begin to move into our Phase II protocols.

Keep in mind, that while there will be some slight changes in the protocols, we will continue to maintain many of the cleaning measures of our Phase I protocols to ensure that we are keeping our parish clean, safe, and healthy.

Following Diocesan Guidelines, recommendations from the Center for Disease Control for public safety, and with a delicate balance for the common good, St. Rita in the Desert Roman Catholic Church will be observing the following guidelines for our Phase II. Please note that guidelines can be changed at any time to ensure the reasonable safety of our parishioners, ministers, and priests.

- ❖ Bishop Weisenburger has suspended the Sunday Mass obligation indefinitely for all persons living in or visiting in the Tucson Diocese.
- ❖ Vulnerable parishioners (defined as: “those over the age of 65 or older and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions”) are strongly urged to remain at home. Likewise, those feeling ill in any way are advised in the strongest sense to remain home and view the Mass online and receive Spiritual Communion.
- ❖ Please be aware that there is an inherent risk, regardless of age or health, in attending any public event, including religious services. While we strive to reduce risks, a parishioner's presence at Mass, or other public events, constitutes their understanding and acceptance of this essential level of risk.
- ❖ The use of masks for those ages six and up is mandatory. This is critical to ensure that we are protecting each other from the spread of the virus.
- ❖ Sunday (weekend) Masses will be celebrated during their normal times. Please call the parish office for further information on Mass times.

To ensure the safety of all who come to St. Rita in the Desert

- ❖ Please use hand sanitizer brought from home when entering and exiting the buildings and wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds when you return home.
- ❖ Frequently touched surfaces and areas will be cleaned between all Masses.
- ❖ All Eucharistic Ministers will wear masks and wash their hands before and after the distribution of Holy Communion. Hand sanitizer will be used during the distribution of Holy Communion.

When coming to St. Rita in the Desert for Sunday Mass

- ❖ Pope St. John XXIII Center shall be used for all our Sunday liturgies.
- ❖ To maintain social distancing, seating must maintain approximately six feet of space between unrelated persons. Please follow the instructions of our Greeters as they adhere to this guideline while seating you.
- ❖ Please be respectful of the signs that state “Church is now full.” When maximum capacity has been met, parishioners are encouraged to watch Mass via Facebook LiveStream or come at a different Mass for the reception of Holy Communion.



OFFICE OF THE PASTOR

...With God, all things are possible! Matt 19:26

Changes in the Mass

- ❖ Collection baskets will not be passed during the offertory. There will be a collection basket located in the narthex and by the communion stations. Please drop your donation into the basket without touching the basket. Thank you for supporting St. Rita's. Without your donations, we cannot continue to function.
- ❖ We will refrain from the use of Holy Water, Missalettes, and songbooks. At this time there will be no singing during Mass except by the cantor.
- ❖ We will refrain from holding hands at the Our Father nor exchanging the usual Sign of Peace. Instead, you are welcome to give a wave or slight bow to those around you.

Specific Guidelines for receiving Holy Communion

- ❖ Holy Communion will be distributed in its normal place, and we ask that the parishioners remain in their place while the Minister and the Extraordinary minister comes to distribute Holy Communion to you in place.
- ❖ Holy Communion, under the species of bread, will be distributed **ONLY IN THE HAND**. The use of the Chalice for distributing the Precious Blood has been suspended.

Confession Schedule

- ❖ Confessions will be on Saturdays at 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- ❖ We will use the Sacristy as it is larger than the confessional and is better ventilated for our use of preventing the spread of the virus.
- ❖ If you do not feel comfortable at this time you may call the parish office to set an appointment for Confession with good social distancing and a mask.

Weekday Masses

- ❖ Weekday Masses may resume using the same protocols for Sunday celebration of the Mass
 - Masks must be worn and that we maintain a distance of 6 feet.
 - Maily Mass times will be 8:00 a.m., Tuesday through Friday. Friday will have an hour of Adoration after Mass.
 - Masses will take place in the St. Pope John XXIII Center
 - We will use the Sunday protocols for the distribution of Holy Communion at Mass.

Celebration of Funerals and Weddings

- ❖ Funerals and weddings: will follow the same protocols as Sunday Masses, especially as it pertains to maximum seating in the Church, music, etc.

Baptisms

- ❖ Baptisms will be limited to twenty (20) persons.
- ❖ Social distances must be maintained during the celebration of the Sacrament



OFFICE OF THE PASTOR

...With God, all things are possible! Matt 19:26

Quinceañeras

- ❖ Quinceañeras are to follow the same protocols as Sunday Masses.
- ❖ No gatherings before or after the celebration at the entrance of the Church or on the Church grounds.
- ❖ Parish facilities may not be rented at this time for celebrations. The guideline listed above for mariachi bands applies.

Parish meetings/gatherings

- ❖ Parish meetings ordinarily are to be held through technology.
- ❖ By exception, they may resume in-person but only when participants are outside the “at-risk” category of the CDC and the participants freely agree to participate.
- ❖ Those who cannot participate in an in-person meeting should be provided the opportunity to participate through technology.
- ❖ All in-person meetings must follow social distancing protocols and the use of masks. Meeting rooms shall be cleaned and disinfected after use and between meetings.
- ❖ If these points cannot be met, then the meetings must take place via technology.

Fiestas/Fund-raising

- ❖ Fiestas, Social Gatherings: During phase II, Fiestas and Social Gatherings are not allowed.
- ❖ Food-preparation/Cooking: Will not be done here at St. Rita in the Desert.
- ❖ Fund-raising endeavors, including raffles, shall be postponed until next year in 2021.

Our Bishop, Most Rev. Edward J. Weisenberger, J.C.L., D.D., our auxiliary priests, our deacons, our staff, and I thank everyone for their continued patience, prayers, and cooperation during these most challenging of times. God bless and keep you always!

Sincerely Yours in Christ's Service,

Reverend Alonzo M. Garcia
Pastor