

**DIOCESE OF MARQUETTE**  
**GUIDELINES FOR FAITH FORMATION DURING PANDEMIC**  
**Fall 2020**

As parishes prepare for the new catechetical year, the Covid-19 pandemic continues to impact the ways in which we gather as Church. While one cannot underestimate the value of gathering face-to-face for faith formation which is essential to the work of evangelization, care must be taken to ensure the safety and health of catechists, staff, volunteers, and students in our programs.

A set of guidelines for the re-opening of our parish faith formation programs has been developed to support your efforts in providing an opportunity for the catechized to have an encounter with Jesus Christ and to hand on our beloved Catholic faith. The Diocese is currently in Phase 5 of the state's *Safe Start Plan*. The guidelines have been written to reflect our current phase. **If the state changes the phase level of the Upper Peninsula the guidelines may be strengthened or relaxed and parishes will be notified of any changes to the guidelines.** Parishes holding classes in Catholic Schools are subject to the guidelines put in place for the school

These guidelines must be sent to all families with children/youth in the parish.

**Phase 5 guidelines**

Face-to-face classroom instruction is allowed and encouraged but parishes must take into consideration the health and welfare of those in our programs. If a parent chooses not to send their child to the in-person classes, parish coordinators should work with the families to ensure they have the necessary resources for catechesis and sacramental preparation to be done at home. A parish can also choose to implement a hybrid program combining at home learning and in-person classes.

If face-to-face classes are held it is recommended that the following guidelines be implemented:

- Screening
  - All catechists, staff and volunteers should monitor themselves for any symptoms of Covid-19 and if present they must not volunteer in person. They may not be volunteer in-person until they have been cleared by a doctor or have gone 10 days without symptoms
  - Parents should monitor their children for any symptoms of Covid-19 and if present do not send their children to faith formation
- Social distancing
  - Desks or seats for children should be at least 6 feet apart
  - Catechists, aids, or volunteers should remain 6 feet from children at all times

- Any large group gathering must allow for social distancing and not exceed the size allowed by the most recent Executive Order
- It is recommended that there be no activities that allow students from different classes to come together such as group meals, group movies, etc. If this is done, it must only be done in areas that allow for social distancing
- There should be no sharing or touching of classroom supplies such as books, pencils, scissors, etc. If a resource can be sanitized before next being used it can be stored at the parish. If your parish has a Catechesis of the Good Shepard atrium serious consideration should be given as to how to sanitize the items used as most of the items are “shared”
- Social distancing should be maintained when using the bathrooms. If this is not possible only one youth at a time may use the bathroom. Signs should be posted in the bathroom on proper handwashing procedures. Encourage parents to have their children use the bathroom prior to attending class
- Masks
  - Masks are optional for staff, catechists, volunteers, and all students when in the classroom
  - Masks must be worn when children/youth and any adults are in the hallways and common areas of the building, including the bathrooms
- Hand washing/sanitizing
  - Every room will have sanitizer and/or a hand washing station
  - As children/youth or adults enter the room they will immediately sanitize/wash their hands
  - Sanitizer should be located at all entrance and exit doors
  - Frequently touched surfaces including door handles, light switches, desks/tables, etc. are to be sanitized before and after classes are held. It is recommended that classroom doors be propped open to limit the amount of the touching of door handles
- Parents
  - Will wear masks when in the building picking up or dropping off their child/youth
  - It is important that any changes in programming that occur due to government orders be communicated to parents through letters, texts, or emails

**Please direct any questions regarding these guidelines to  
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