

# **Catholic Mutual... " CARES "**

## Drive-In Church Services

Not every church has the means of providing televised/streaming services during the coronavirus pandemic. As an alternative, many are now opting to conduct drive-in church services as a way of ministering to our parishioners. This can offer a sense of community whereas the parishioners are safe within their own vehicle participating with fellow worshippers while maintaining social distancing. If your parish is capable of offering drive-in church services, please consider the following guidelines to help reduce the potential of spread and to be in compliance with CDC and State/Local guidelines.

- First and foremost, you must check with your local authorities in advance of any "drive-in" worship service to ensure it is allowed. Every jurisdiction is different.
- As you proceed, first assess and formulate parking procedures on the parish property. Determine the number of stalls that can be utilized and only allow that number of vehicles into the parking lot. It will be important to notify your parishioners ahead of time that some may be turned away as the lot will be full.
- Vehicles should be a minimum of 6 feet apart. Every other parking stall should be used as in the examples below:



- Once established, the church should notify parishioners of their guidelines for parking during the service. This can be done by a broadcast email, church website, text message and/or other means of communication throughout your parish.
- Establish a radio frequency to broadcast the service on. This frequency should be provided to the parishioners through mass communication and by posting a sign at the entrance(s) of the parking lot for all to see.
- If you do not have the means of broadcasting the service via radio, the use of a speaker system could be utilized. In this case, windows would need to be partially rolled down in order to hear the service. With this method, it will be crucial the 6 foot social distancing between vehicles is strictly adhered to.
- If there is any threat of storms/lightning in your area, do not conduct the service until the official weather service indicates it is safe to be outdoors (for the pastor and others that won't be inside of a vehicle). As a reminder, lightning can strike up to 10 miles away from the source of the storm.
- In an effort to reduce exposure, only essential persons need to assist with Mass. Limit the number of ushers, greeters and/or volunteers needed for each Mass.

- The parking should be guided by ushers and/or volunteers who are maintaining social distancing.
- Parking attendants should wear bright colored vests, as well as PPE to help guide parishioners to a parking stall.
- During the service, the parking attendants should constantly view the parking lot to monitor the social distancing and help those who are in need of any assistance.
- The Sacrament of Holy Communion should not be conducted in an effort to reduce the potential of spreading the virus.
- If you are receiving offerings from the vehicles, recommend following these safety guidelines:
  - For your situation, you may consider either collecting from parishioners as they exit the parking lot or, during the Mass to avoid any traffic congestion. It is not recommended you collect while vehicles are entering the parking lot as this could interrupt normal traffic flow on the street(s).
  - Utilize long handle baskets to collect offerings while maintaining social distancing.
  - Those who are collecting, must wear PPE to include masks and gloves.
  - Be cautious with large accumulations of money and consider taking inside to counting room on a frequent basis.

It is recommended that daily updates from the CDC and your State/Local Health Departments are heeded and procedures updated as needed. Please refer to the CDC's website at the following link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/>

*Should you have any questions or need further assistance, please contact your Risk Management Representative.*