



St. Peter the Apostle Catholic Church – Itasca, Illinois

**REVISED Guidelines for Mass Attendance and Parish Activities**  
(as of August 19, 2021)

## **REVISED COVID-19 Protocols**

The progress of the COVID-19 pandemic in Illinois remains unpredictable. The Diocese of Joliet continues to consult with public health, education, and civil authorities and modify requirements as conditions, mandates, and guidance change. We are committed to providing an integrated, safe, responsible, and balanced perspective. Faithful citizenship is key. We expect individuals to take personal responsibility for the common good, and their own safety. Remember that taking every precaution to reduce the spread of the virus is an act of charity toward others in Christ, particularly toward the sick, the elderly, and those too young to receive vaccine protection.

- **We encourage everyone to get vaccinated.**
- **WEARING A MASK is STRONGLY recommended for everyone – vaccinated or not – while INSIDE the church and parish facilities.**
- **Masks are required for everyone participating in religious education program-related activities, regardless of vaccination status.**
- **Continue to use hand sanitizer.**
- Because Bishop Hicks has NOT yet reinstated the obligation to attend Sunday Mass, live streaming of one weekly Sunday Mass will continue until the obligation is restored.
- For those not comfortable with seating close to others, “safe seating” in every other pew is available on the west side of the church toward the front. Signs are in place and may not be removed.  
(see chart on following page)
- **Congregational singing is once again NOT ALLOWED.**  
Hymnals are in the pews to use if needed to read the prayers and readings.
- **Once again, Holy Communion is to be received ONLY by hand.** The option of Communion on the **TONGUE is NOT ALLOWED** until we are given permission from Bishop Hicks. This will hopefully be temporary. The priest, deacon or communion minister will direct you to receive in the hand.
- NO Holy Water will be in the fonts at the doors of the church, for the foreseeable future. Holy Water is available in the Baptismal Font. This water is purified and cleansed by a system built into the font.
- **NO “usual” Exchange of Peace at Mass.**  
The “Sign of Peace” comes in the Mass when the priest says, “*The Peace of the Lord be with you always*” and the congregation responds, “*And with your spirit.*” That is the “Sign of Peace.” However, there has always been the *option* for the priest (at his discretion) to add... “*Let us offer each other the Sign of Peace.*” Over the years, we’ve become accustomed to this option always being added. For the foreseeable future, we are NOT to exchange the Sign of Peace with those around us by shaking hands or making the personal contact we are accustomed to. A simple bow or wave is sufficient. Since the priest may NOT invite the exchange, please do not add it to the liturgy, since no one should add to the liturgy anything of their own accord.

As changes and revisions are made by the Government and Church leadership, we will continually keep parishioners informed, and changes will be made as the situation allows.

Our goal is to maintain a safe, responsible, cooperative, and healthy operation of the parish in these difficult times.



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Safe Seating Section for ALL Masses  
June, 2021

