

Preparing for a Baptism

Job Aid

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



In conjunction with:

Diocese of Rockford

Diocese of Joliet

Diocese of Peoria

Diocese of Springfield

Diocese of Belleville



Please check with your local Diocese for any changes to this document

These guidelines for celebrating Baptism in a Church reflect the updated guidance by government officials, healthcare professionals, and Church authorities.

These guidelines are based on current requirements for groups no greater than 10 in the church at any time. This is exclusive of all ministers and an usher or greeter.

Parishes should adapt only as necessary, *however, being careful not to violate social distancing, face covering, and disinfecting practices.*

Parishes or pastors may **NOT** alter number of allowed worshippers, social distancing, face covering, or disinfecting guidelines contained here.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles are required to ensure the health and safety of everyone involved in the rite of Baptism:

Role	Responsibility
Greeter	<p>All attendees are to be greeted outside of the physical church building by a greeter. This greeter's responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcoming attendees back to the church• Ensuring each attendee is on the attendee list• Asking each attendee the COVID-19 screening questions• Ensuring all attendees are wearing masks or face covers• Providing masks to attendees who do not already have a mask or face covering• Sending each attendee to a predesignated point where he or she will be queued to be seated by an usher• Sending those who pass into the vestibule• Managing any issues that may arise from the attendee's lack being on the attendee list
Usher	<p>Ushers are stationed within the church to assist attendees in finding social-distance appropriate seats and for leading a careful, socially distant exit from the church after the rite has concluded. He she is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disinfecting all attendees' hands prior to entering the church.• Escorting each attendee/party to the next appropriate open pew (while following social distancing standards)• Explaining where to sit in the pew to the attendees• Ensuring that social distancing guidelines are being followed throughout the rite• At the end of the rite, coordinating a careful, controlled exit from the church, following all social distancing standards
Cleaner	<p>Cleaners are the people who disinfect the church and surrounding areas following completion of the rite.</p>
Priest/Deacon	<p>The Priest/Deacon is the person who conducts the rite.</p>

Step by Step

Preparing for Baptism

General Notes:

- Notify family/attendees at least 5 days in advance of the Baptism, about safety procedures for participating in any Church service during this pandemic. Include request to provide their own masks or face coverings, checking temperatures on the day of the Baptism, encouraging vulnerable individuals not to attend, alerting the pastor to anyone who is ill, etc. Include specific instructions about your parish procedures for entry into the church.
- Use of a temporary receptacle for the water is advised. Placed in front of altar if possible, but in a space in which social distancing can be observed.
- The floor of the church should have tape marks around the font/receptacle indicating where parents should stand while observing the required social distancing from the priest.
- The first or second row of pews (depending on distance from the font/receptacle area) should be marked for parents, godparents, and other guests. Marks should be placed at least 6–8 feet apart for these guests indicating where they should sit. Further, there needs to be 6–8 feet distance in front of and behind guests if multiple pews need to be used.
- Masks or face coverings must be worn by all participating in the Baptism, including godparents and other witnesses. Masks or face coverings should be worn for the entire service by all participating, with the exception of the baby if under 2 years old. Given the IDPH and CDC guidelines, those with breathing difficulties should be advised to stay at home. If there is a need to attend, they can be exempted from this requirement, but those individuals must observe the strictest of social distancing from anyone not living in their domicile.

Preparing the Church for Baptism

TASK #1

Setting up the Baptismal Table

Step 1: Place the table

A table should be set up near the receptacle to hold all needed supplies.

To allow for ongoing disinfection, it is recommended that a glass top be placed on the tabletop.



Step 2: Font/Receptacle

The font/receptacle must be emptied and thoroughly cleaned with bleach wipes before every baptism.

Following cleaning, the font/receptacle must be allowed to dry before use.

Fresh water must be used for each individual Baptism.



Step 3: Oil of the Catechumen and the Chrism

Both the Oil of the Catechumen and the Chrism should be pre-dipped on a small cotton swab or Q-tip and placed on glass plates on the table for use.



Step 4: Safety Equipment

To protect the safety of priest and all attendees, the following items must be placed on the table:

- A face shield for use by the priest
- Hand disinfectant for use by the priest and all attendees

TASK #2

Setting up the Church

Step 1: Place Social Distancing Markers:

Place tape marks on the floor around the font/receptacle table to indicate where parents should stand to observe appropriate social distancing



Step 2: Prepare the Pews

The first or second row of pews (depending on distance from the font/receptacle area) should be marked for parents, godparents, and other guests. Marks should be placed at least 6–8 feet apart for these guests indicating where they should sit. Further, there needs to be 6–8 feet distance in front and behind guests if multiple pews need to be used.



Entering the Building

TASK #1

Greeting Attendees (Outside of Church)

Step 1: Welcome attendees back to church!

Enthusiastically welcome worshipers back to church.

Step 2: Symptom/Temperature Self-Check

On the day of the Baptism, all attendees are strongly encouraged to take their temperatures and complete a self-check for symptoms.

The pastor must immediately be alerted if anyone is displaying any symptoms or is running a fever.

Step 3: Check the attendee list.

- Check the reservation list to verify the attendee is on the list

Note: For any attendee who not on the attendance list refer to the De-escalation worksheet as needed.

Step 4: Ensure everyone is wearing a mask or face covering.

Masks should be provided to any attendees who do not bring their own.

Step 5: Verify that all attendees are symptom-free.

Ask:

- Is anyone feeling ill today?
- Does anyone have a temperature today?
- Has anyone been directly exposed to COVID-19 in the last 14 days?

Note: Anyone who responds “Yes” to any of these questions should not be admitted into the church. Consult with the pastor before addressing this with attendees

Step 6: Once attendees are screened for symptoms and their attendance is confirmed, direct attendees to predesignated socially distanced areas of the vestibule to await instructions from the Usher.

Entering the Church

TASK #1

Greeting Attendees in the Vestibule

Step 1: Welcome attendees back to church!

Enthusiastically welcome worshipers back to church.

Step 2: Disinfect the hands of all attendees.

- Explain to each attendee the need to disinfect everyone's hands.
- Spray each attendee's hands with hand disinfectant



Step 3: Direct attendees to stay at their designated space until the Usher directs them to their designated seat.

TASK #2

Seating Attendees

Step 1: Usher summons attendee to next available open pew.

Step 2: Usher instructs attendee where to sit in the pew (while maintaining proper social distancing).

Note: Ushers must use predesignated seating markers to guide the seating process. Social distancing requires 6 feet between each attendee or group of attendees (i.e., families, couples, etc.).

Note: For Baptisms, parents with their baby should be seated in the front-most pew without the need for social distancing.

Conducting the Rite of Baptism: Only elements or tasks adjusted for safe practices are outlined here. All other elements of the rite are performed as already known.

TASK #1

Sign Baby on the Head

Step 1: Disinfect your hands.

Priest must disinfect his hands prior to signing the baby on the forehead.



Step 2: Priest/Deacon puts on face shield

Inform parents and attendees that this is being done for the safety of both the child and the priest/deacon.

Step 3: The Priest moves to the pew where the parents and the baby are seated.

Sign the baby on the forehead and return to your original location

Step 4: Disinfect your hands.

Priest must re-disinfect his hands after signing the baby on the forehead. Priest may remove their face shield when he moves away from the baby and parents

TASK #2

Conduct Rite of Baptism

Step 1: Liturgy of the Word

Priest may remove his mask for the Liturgy of the Word.

Note: Parents are to remain in their assigned pew/seats for the Liturgy of the Word.



Step 2: Priest/Deacon invites **ONLY** the parents and child up to the vessel and directs them to stand on the predesignated social distancing marker near the vessel.

Step 3: After inviting the parents and baby to come forward Priest/Deacon puts on face shield again

Step 4: Conduct Blessing of Water

Face shield must remain in place.

Step 5: Baptism and Anointings

Face shield must remain in place.

Step 6: Presentation of Garment/Lighting of Candle

Face shield must remain in place.

Step 7: Concluding Rite

Priest may remove his face shield for the Concluding Rite.

Exiting the Church

TASK #1

Exiting the Church

Step 1: Priest/Deacon reminds the attendees that they must remain seated until the Ushers call them to exit the pew.

Remind the attendees that photos inside the church after the conclusion are not allowed.

Step 2: Starting at the last pew, the Ushers thank the participants for coming and direct the attendees to exit the church.

Note: Social distancing requires 6 feet between each attendee or group of attendees (i.e., families, couples, etc.) as they exit.

Step 3: Greeter (in Vestibule) directs the attendees outside of the church so that there is no gathering within the Vestibule.

Note: Attendees will be excited, and will want to congratulate the parents and take photographs. Photographs **MUST** be taken outside of the church.

Step 4: If the Priest/Deacon is invited to take photographs, it is required that the Priest/Deacon leave their mask or face covering on at all times and use social distancing at all times.

NOTES ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHY:

- Parents and attendees must move outside of the church for pictures.
- Everyone, including the priest/deacon, must remain masked for all pictures and maintain social distancing at all times.

Disinfecting the Church

TASK #1

Disinfecting the Church

Step 1: Remove any debris left behind by attendees (including used masks or face coverings which cannot be reused) and dispose of properly.

Step 2: All pews and kneelers must be disinfected using the procedures in the Disinfecting Job Aid.

Step 3: Church door handles and plates must be disinfected using the procedures in the Disinfecting Job Aid.

Step 4: Once all attendees have left the building, all church restrooms and common areas must be disinfected using the procedures in the Disinfecting Job Aid.

Disinfecting Instruments, Receptacles, and Materials

TASK #1

Disinfecting the instruments, receptacles, and materials used during the rite

Step 1: Empty the font/receptacle and properly dispose of blessed water.

Step 2: Remove cotton swabs/Q-tips with holy oils and dispose of properly.

Step 3: Disinfect the font/receptacle following the procedures outlined in the Disinfection Job Aid.

Step 4: Disinfect the plate that held the cotton swabs/Q-tips following the procedures outlined in the Disinfection Job Aid.

Step 5: Disinfect the face shield worn by the priest/deacon during the rite, following the same bleach mixture/water-only process and allow to dry.

Step 6: The outside covers and bindings of all ritual books should be disinfected following the procedures from the Disinfecting Job Aid.

Checklist

Preparing for Baptism

Name of Family and Child: _____

Date of Baptism: _____ Time: _____

Prepare the Church (Cleaner): Name: _____

TASK	Complete	DESCRIPTION
Place Baptismal table	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	Use glass top if possible
Wash/Dry Font/Receptacle and place on table	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	Allow to dry before use
Prepare Oil of Catechumen and the Chrism and place on table	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	On cotton swabs or Q-ips
Place face shield on table	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	For use by priest
Place hand disinfectant on table	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	For use by all
Place social distancing markers around font/receptacle	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Prepare pews according to social distancing standards	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	

Entering the Building (Greeter): Name: _____

TASK	Complete	DESCRIPTION
Send COVID-19 Guidelines to Attendees	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	At least 5 days prior to Baptism
Enthusiastically welcome attendees	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	Enthusiasm is contagious!
Ask symptom-check screening questions	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	Any YES response prevents entry
Check attendance list	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	Attendees not on the Attendance list may not be admitted
Direct attendee into the vestibule	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	

Entering the Church (Greeter): Name: _____

TASK	Complete	DESCRIPTION
Enthusiastically welcome attendees	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	Enthusiasm is contagious!
Spray hand disinfectant on each attendee's hands	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
For the greeting at the door, direct parents to appropriate spot at the back of an aisle (marked with an X)	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	

Seating Attendees (Usher): Name: _____

TASK	Complete	DESCRIPTION
Summon attendee/attendee group to next available pew (load front to back)	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	Parents/baby should be in the first available (frontmost) pew
Instruct attendees on where to sit within the pew to maintain social distancing	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Allow attendees to sit	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	Provide additional instructions if social distancing is not maintained

Checklist

Conducting a Rite of Baptism

Conducting the Rite of Baptism (Priest/Deacon):

Name: _____

TASK	Complete	DESCRIPTION
Disinfect own hands	Completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Sign baby on head	Completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Re-disinfect own hands	Completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Conduct Liturgy of the Word	Completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	May be done without a mask
Put on face shield	Completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Blessing of Water	Completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Baptism and anointings	Completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Conduct Presentation of Garment & Lighting of Candle	Completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Instruct parents to return to designated pew/seat	Completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Conduct concluding Rite	Completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Put on own face mask	Completed: <input type="checkbox"/>	

Checklist

Post-Baptism Activities

Exiting the Church (Usher/Greeter): Name: _____

TASK	Complete	DESCRIPTION
Enthusiastically congratulate the attendees	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Ask the attendees to remain seated until they are invited to exit	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Starting at the last pew, ask the attendee/attendee group to stand	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Direct attendees to exit the Church one at a time when invited	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Direct the attendees to continue to exit the church	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	

Disinfecting the Church (Cleaner): Name: _____

TASK	Complete	DESCRIPTION
Remove debris (including any used face masks) and dispose of properly	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	Gloves and masks must be worn throughout the disinfecting process.
Wipe down pews and kneelers with bleach-based solution	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Wipe down pews and kneelers with water-soaked cloth	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Allow pews and kneelers to dry	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Wipe down Church door handles and plates with bleach-based solution	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Wipe down Church door handles and plates with water-soaked cloth	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Allow Church door handles and plates to dry	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Disinfect restrooms	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	After all attendees have left the building

Disinfecting the Instruments, Receptacles, & Materials (Cleaner):

Name: _____

TASK	Complete	DESCRIPTION
Dispose of blessed water from the font/receptacle (use the sacrarium or pour into the ground)	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	Gloves and masks must be worn throughout the disinfecting process.
Remove cotton swabs/Q-tips soaked in Holy Oils and dispose of properly (burn or bury them)	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Wipe down font/receptacle with bleach-based solution	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Wipe down font/receptacle with water-soaked cloth	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Allow font/receptacle to dry	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Wipe down plate holding Holy Oil swabs with bleach-based solution	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Wipe down plate holding Holy Oil swabs with water-soaked cloth	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Allow plate holding Holy Oil swabs to dry	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Wipe down face shield with bleach-based solution	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Wipe down face shield with water-soaked cloth	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Allow face shield to dry	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	Make sure it is streak-free
Wipe down outside covers and bindings of all ritual books with bleach-based solution	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Wipe down outside covers and bindings of all ritual books with water-soaked cloth	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Allow outside covers and bindings of all ritual books to dry	Complete: <input type="checkbox"/>	