



# GREEK ORTHODOX METROPOLIS OF CHICAGO

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## ΙΕΡΑ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΟΛΙΣ ΣΙΚΑΓΟΥ

### THE DIVINE LITURGY – REVISED GUIDELINES MAY 2021

We are grateful for the ability to return to many of our practices prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The following directives and rubrics contemplate the fully vaccinated status of both clergy and laity. Individuals are considered fully vaccinated 14 days after their final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. The final dose is defined as the second dose of a two-dose vaccine (i.e., Pfizer or Moderna), or the first dose of a one-dose vaccine (i.e., Johnson & Johnson). Individuals who are not fully vaccinated are encouraged to continue to observe wearing of a face mask over the nose and mouth, and to observe social distancing.

Individuals will not be asked as to their vaccination status and no record will be maintained as vaccination status. ***However, as part of our shared responsibility to reduce the spread of the virus, individuals will be required to sign in for contact tracing purposes.*** To this end, each parish must either use a reservation system or take names upon the arrival of the faithful.

Each parish must establish a portion of the Nave for individuals who choose to maintain wearing of face masks and practice social distancing, and for individuals who are not fully vaccinated. Individuals who prefer to be seated in the socially distanced seating area must alert an usher upon arrival to request such seating. Individuals in the socially distanced seating area must wear face masks covering the nose and mouth at all times.

As the pandemic landscape evolves, the Holy Metropolis had issued and revised certain directives concerning the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. These directives are to be used in conjunction with other Metropolis Directives ([chicago.goarch.org/reopening-parishes](http://chicago.goarch.org/reopening-parishes)) and special Orders and Directives issued by local authorities. Currently, in all areas of our Metropolis, the directives to observe ventilation and contact tracing are still in place.

#### ***A. General Instructions***

1. Concelebrations by clergy may resume. Clergy who are fully vaccinated may independently determine if they desire to wear a face mask; clergy who are not fully vaccinated should wear a facemask.
2. Choirs may resume, provided that all participating choir members are fully vaccinated. Multiple chanters at one chanter stand may resume, provided all chanters at the stand are fully vaccinated.
3. Acolytes are encouraged to socially distance when within the altar area.
4. Veneration of icons and other sacred items may resume.
5. If a parish wishes to celebrate simultaneous Divine Liturgies, the parish priest must first contact the Chancellor's office.
6. Customary donation and candle lighting practices may resume in the Narthex.
7. Ushers may resume handling cash at the candle stands.

8. Tray offerings may resume, and digital offering options are encouraged
9. Contact tracing sign-in must continue, and an usher should monitor for legibility. Parishes may independently determine if they wish to continue with a reservation system.
10. Parishes must establish a section of the Nave for socially distanced seating.
11. Combined entry and exit to/from the church building may resume.
12. Hand sanitizer stations are encouraged to remain in place.
13. Sanitizing of the Nave and Narthex after Divine Liturgy is no longer required unless another service or sacrament is being offered on the same day.

### ***B. Special Safety Instructions***

1. Disinfecting Hands: Clergy and laity are encouraged to continue to disinfect their hands prior to the start of the Divine Liturgy and at various times during the service.
2. Disinfecting Vessels and Objects: All vessels, tables, and liturgical items must be properly cleaned before the start of the Divine Liturgy and at its conclusion.
3. Wearing Masks: All clergy and laity who are not fully vaccinated should wear a mask covering the mouth and nose at all times. Fully vaccinated clergy and laity may independently determine if they desire to wear a face mask. Clergy, sextons and altar servers are encouraged to disinfect their hands before and after handing or receiving any object.

### ***C. Liturgical Rubrics***

1. Orthros: On Sundays, the Gospel may be brought out to the Narthex and be available for veneration.
2. Censing: The clergyman may continue to resume the normal censing patterns within the church.
3. Processions: Processions may continue to follow normal patterns for entrances.
4. Blessing after the Epistle Reading: The readers may approach the priest for his blessing.
5. Reading of the Holy Gospel: The Holy Gospel should be read from the normally prescribed locations. Acolytes may resume their normally prescribed location during the reading of the Gospel.
6. Communion of the faithful:
  - a. The faithful will continue to receive Holy Communion at the proper time.
  - b. Priests who are not fully vaccinated should wear a facemask and/or protective eyewear when distributing Holy Communion.
  - c. Priests must use a clean and unused communion cloth for every celebration of the Divine Liturgy. An ample supply of clean communion cloths should be available in the altar.
  - d. The faithful should sanitize their hands as they approach the chalice and may touch the communion cloth.

- e. Parishioners who wish to blot their lips on the communion cloth may do so.
- f. If, at any time during Holy Communion, the priest feels that the communion cloth is no longer clean, he should immediately replace it with a clean cloth.
- g. Antidoron will be distributed after Holy Communion, and at dismissal.

### **Offerings Brought to the Church**

As a general rule, a parish should secure for itself the prosforon, arto, kolyva, wine and oil needed for a service. For the distribution of such offerings the following protocol must be followed:

1. Kolyva: If a parishioner brings a plate of kolyva for a memorial service, the parish may resume normal placement of the kolyva on the memorial table. At the conclusion of the memorial service, the commercially prepared kolyva, parish-sourced kolyva, and pre-bagged kolyva may be distributed to the faithful in attendance.

2. Prosforon, Wine, Oil and other Offerings: All offerings such as prosforon, arto, wine, oil, or any other offering to the church, must be sanitized, safely handled, and brought to the altar to be used by the priest.

### **Coffee and Social Hour after Services**

As a general rule, a parish may reinstate its coffee hour. Prepackaged treats and controlled coffee and beverage service are encouraged.