**Funerals at St. Brendan During the Pandemic as of 7/20/20**

The following guidelines for celebrating funerals during the pandemic are taken from our diocese’s Office for Divine Worship and also based on our specific experiences here at St. Brendan. They are in place until new recommendations are given. We understand that these may be hard to take in as you grieve in such a challenging time, but we ask for your cooperation. They are meant to keep all in attendance as safe while still participating as much as possible in the funeral rites.

**Vigil Service**

* A vigil service at a funeral home can take place with a priest or deacon available to preside. Safe distancing guidelines apply as directed by the funeral home.

**Visitation prior to Mass**

* We are unable to offer visitation in the gathering space prior to Mass. If a family chooses to hold a visitation time before Mass, it should be scheduled at the funeral home.

**Funeral Mass**

* Arrival for Mass
	+ Please do not arrive more than 15 minutes before Mass. No guests will be permitted to enter the church until then. Enter through the main doors only.
	+ All family and guests should wear a mask upon leaving their cars and for the duration of their time in the church
	+ **All guests should proceed directly into the church and sit in the designated pews**, not stopping to greet one another or congregating in the gathering space. The space does not accommodate socially distanced gatherings.
		- **For Mass with a casket present:** A small group of immediate family will process in from the gathering space and may wait there until Mass begins
		- **For Mass with cremated remains present:** All family should be seated in pews as there is no family procession
		- Guests who do not live in the same household should stay at least 6 feet apart
* During Mass
	+ Funeral directors, not family, will place the pall on the casket or the urn on the table
	+ Readings will be proclaimed by clergy or pastoral associate only to avoid having others in the sanctuary area
	+ Gifts of bread and wine will already be at the altar with no procession by family
	+ There remains no sign of peace
	+ The clergy or pastoral associate will be the only ones distributing communion, under the Sacred Host only. Please follow directions for approaching to receive – single file and distancing. Please lower your mask and remove gloves (if wearing) to receive in your hand.
* After Mass
	+ Family and guests should leave the church and gathering space immediately and orderly, maintaining space, even if not going to the cemetery for committal
		- The church sanitation completed after every Mass needs to begin immediately and your exit helps our crew
	+ There are no Celebration of Life Luncheons currently as we cannot safely distance. We are happy to provide a tray of sandwiches and desserts for you to take to your gathering.

**Committal**

* When possible, the committal should take place outside near the gravesite or columbarium unless the chapel can accommodate social distance guidelines. Please work with the funeral home regarding this.
* Military honors can take place if available