



Office of *Youth Formation*

June 29, 2020

Dear Parish Formation Leaders,

As you know, Bishop Pates has initiated a reopening certification process for all parish Youth Formation programs that plan to reopen in the Fall. This certification process applies to all child and teen programs and ministries - from birth through high school.

We wish to thank each of you for your dedication, your creativity and flexibility throughout these challenging times, and we are here to support you in any way can. It is our hope that this Reopening Certification Packet will greatly benefit you as you plan for the Fall. This process has been specifically tailored to Youth Formation and the diverse needs of individual parishes and programs. Additionally, it will enable our office, in collaboration with the ten Youth Formation Deaneries, to identify and support any parish or program that may need assistance as we prepare for the Fall.

Please know that the COVID-19 situation is being carefully monitored by our office and throughout the Diocese of Joliet. These reopening plans are in compliance with all Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) COVID Protocols and the Diocese of Joliet Reopening protocols. We highly encourage you to engage in open dialogue and active collaboration with all parish leadership and initiatives to reopen – most notably:

- Your pastor and parish staff.
- Your parish reopening team, responsible for the phased reopening of the Church.
- Your school's principal and the School Reopening Team (if applicable).

The following pages are to be completed by the director of each child or teen program and/or ministry. We ask that you follow the Reopening Timeline on page one. Please know that you must understand and abide by all state, local, and diocesan guidelines, and you must maintain a high standard of compliance as the phases change and potential new challenges develop. You must demonstrate an adequate level of planning for each program for which you are responsible. Your plans will need to be certified even if they are fully virtual. We will work with you identify potential gaps in your plans and to assist in finding solutions. This process is meant to be simple and most beneficial to you. You are not alone - let us know how we can best assist you in this time.

We continue to lift you and your parish in prayer – thank you for all you do!

Sincerely,

Ryan Purcell
Director of the Office of Youth Formation

Youth Formation Program Reopening Timeline

Important Submission Dates:

- 1) [FORM 1: Youth Formation Leader COVID-19 Impact Survey](#)..... Due by Saturday, June 27
- 2) FORM 2: Program Reopening Plan..... Due by Wednesday, July 15

The target date for all programs to be certified for reopening is July 30. However, we recognize that this timeline may be very challenging for some for a variety of reasons. Please reach out to your specific OYF Contact and Deanery Chair if you need any assistance or accommodations (See Form 1 for contact info).

Detailed Timeline Instructions

Before July 15, the Youth Formation leader will:

- 1) Collaborate with a few trusted individuals (Pastor, Parochial Vicar, lead catechist, or youth minister to complete **Form 2: Program Reopening Plan** which outlines actions to be taken in five key areas.
- 2) Involve the new or incoming leader in the planning process (for programs that will be welcoming new formation leaders). The use of shared screen capabilities on Zoom, Microsoft Teams, or a comparable platform is highly recommended.
- 3) Engage parish staff (including the school principal) if the program uses shared facilities, and work with a few key volunteers to review the proposed plan. Consider including a member of the parish's re-opening team, preferably the Parish Compliance Manager.
- 4) Review, discuss, and amend the plan with this group, and make final edits.
- 5) Consult with his/her deanery chair and the Office of Youth Formation as needed.
- 6) **Submit the Reopening Plan to the Office of Youth Formation by Wednesday, July 15.** Religious Education and Youth Ministry plans will be evaluated and certified in the order in which they are received.

In August, the Youth Formation leader will:

- 1) Convene a meeting of volunteer catechists and/or youth ministry leaders to discuss the implementation of all plans. This meeting should ideally be in-person and involve a walk-through of the facility and procedures. Masks should be worn, and social distancing should be observed.
- 2) Review Bishop's current recommendations, Governor Pritzker's current recommendations, information from the healthcare community, and opening guidelines of the CDC and other agencies. (See page 3 of this document)
- 3) Review the program plan and revise in terms of any lessons learned from the Parish or Catholic School Reopening Plans.
- 4) Continue open dialogue and active collaboration with Pastor, Parish Staff, Parish Reopening Team, Principal & School Reopening Team (if applicable), and catechists/volunteers - making adjustments to the plan as needed.
- 5) Inform parents of all changes to previous procedures and publicize key elements of the plan.

Phase 4: Revitalization – *What this phase looks like*

Upon entering Phase 4, additional measures can be carefully lifted allowing for schools and childcare programs to reopen with **social distancing policies in place**. Restaurants can open with limited capacity and following strict public health procedures, including personal protective equipment for employees. **Gatherings with 50 people** or fewer will be permitted. Testing is widely available, and tracing is commonplace.

I have read and understand the conditions and requirements of operating within the **Phase 4** protocols as outline in the IDPH protocols and [those set forth by the Diocese of Joliet](#). I will implement and adhere to these standards.

(Director’s Signature)

(Date)

Phase Monitoring

While these guidelines assume that we will continue in a forward trajectory we must remain adaptive and prepared to navigate in whatever phase we find ourselves. And because each community has its own unique factors it is HIGHLY recommended that each director regularly monitors the status of their specific school districts and county health statuses. It is advised that directors, pastors, and principals as well as surrounding school principals maintain good communication to ensure that all parties including the parents are duly and appropriately informed.

(Director’s Signature)

(Date)

Diocese of Joliet Diocese of Joliet - Phased Re-opening Guidelines

I have read and understand the conditions and requirements as [set forth by the Diocese of Joliet](#) and will implement and adhere to these standards.

(Director’s Signature)

(Date)

Key factors to consider as you establish your plan

- **TEMPERATURE MONITORING:** How will you ensure continuous and consistent temperature monitoring and hygiene standards? How will you proceed if someone has a temperature? What if someone is confirmed to have COVID?
- **HEALTH AND SAFETY:** How will you ensure continuous and consistent disinfection? Water fountains? Well ventilated gathered spaces? Do you have a designated COVID Isolation Spot? Are you prepared if someone gets sick? Will you have a nurse, or someone designated to oversee this process? **How will you notify the proper health authorities in accordance with state and local laws and regulations?**
- **HOW WILL YOU IMPLEMENT:** The health protocols? Food Considerations? The wearing of masks? The installment of plastic barriers for those who work intake? Registrations? The screening of visitors? Controlling the access of those outside the organization?
- **SPACE / PHYSICAL DISTANCING:** How will you ensure physical distancing in all areas of your program? In the learning spaces, corridors, bathrooms, lobby, playground, church, gym, etc.?
- **SHARED OBJECTS / SPACES:** How do we minimize contact of commonly utilized object? How will sanitize common area? The high-touch areas? What coordinated efforts will be implemented to insure proper sanitizing and scheduling of cleaning services? Who needs to be included in this conversation?
- **WHICH GRADE COMES BACK FIRST AND HOW MANY?** How will you prioritize schedules /classes / groups? How could you stagger meeting times?
- **SCHEDULING:** What will the timeline look like? What events need to be re-aligned to minimize cross-over? Do you need to stagger scheduling times? Stagger arrivals/dismissal times?
- **STAFFING NEEDS:** How will you determine staffing needs based on enrollment and space? How will you ensure the health, safety, and social distancing? Do you have built in redundancies and back up staffing plans for personnel in case of illness?
- **STAFFING TRAINING:** How will you train staff and volunteers on health standards, sanitizing, hygiene, etc. How will you keep them up to date on the ever-updating protocols?
- **COMMUNICATIONS & MESSAGING:** How will you communicate the expectations and processes , the drop off and pick up patterns, etc. with parents. How will you notify parents regarding a possible case of COVID? Regarding the standing health protocols? No Food ? Must Wear Masks?etc...
- **TRAFFIC FLOW:** How will you control arrival and dismissal of students, movement to and from classrooms, how will you direct movement to and from classrooms? and insure social distancing throughout the entire program?
- **REPHASING:** What elements / plans need to be in place should we need to return to Phase 3? Phase 2? Phase 1? How would you continue your program?
- **ADDITIONAL REFERENCE RESOURCES:** [Illinois State Board of Education/ IDPH Transition Planning](#)

The Five Areas

Those responsible for directing ministries or programs must submit an action plan for **each program** they oversee (Religious Education, Youth Ministry (HS & JRH), Confirmation-(if outside of RE), R.E.A.C.H., Dead Theologians Society, VBS, etc.) providing clear direction, planning, and guidance for the five areas below. These plans and strategies are to be put in place and diligently maintained. Please Initial and date each section, then sign and date below. It is understood that all the guidelines articulated in the [Diocese of Joliet - Phased Re-Opening Plan](#) will be followed.

(initial) (date)

I. Physical Infrastructure

It is understood that all programs that fall within the usage of Parish and/or School spaces will work collaboratively to facilitate the usage of these shared spaces – adhering to all protocols outlined in this document, in addition to those outlined by the Diocese of Joliet and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) – compliant with whatever Phase of Re-Entry within which we are operating.

II. Health and Safety

It is understood that all programs that fall within the Religious Education, Youth Formation and Campus Ministries will adhere to all protocols outlined in this document – in addition to those outlined by the Diocese of Joliet and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) – compliant with whatever Phase of Re-Entry within which we are operating.

III. Scheduling and Staffing

It is understood that ALL programs that fall within the Religious Education, Youth Formation and Campus Ministries will adhere to all protocols outline in this document – in addition to those outlined by the Diocese of Joliet and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) – compliant with whatever Phase of Re-Entry within which we are operating.

IV. Traffic Flow: Arrival and Departure

It is understood that ALL programs that fall within the Religious Education, Youth Formation and Campus Ministries will adhere to all protocols outline in this document – in addition to those outlined by the Diocese of Joliet and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) – compliant with whatever Phase of Re-Entry within which we are operating.

V. Special Needs

It is understood that ALL programs that fall within the Religious Education, Youth Formation and Campus Ministries will adhere to all protocols outline in this document – in addition to those outlined by the Diocese of Joliet and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) – compliant with whatever Phase of Re-Entry within which we are operating.

The goal of these protocols is to ensure safety and to minimize interaction and the risk of transmission

(Director's Signature)

(Date)

(Pastor's Signature)

(Date)

Physical Infrastructure Action Plan

Please describe your plan¹:

Signage for health and safety Protocols posted ² - Important Considerations

- In the hallways
- In the classrooms
- At ALL entrances
- Designated and marked traffic flow plans for entering and exiting the building to ensure social distancing and safety
- Is there clear signage indicating no gathering of groups/parents in large open spaces?
- Plan for the utilization of spaces within the building for special and extracurricular activities to ensure health and safety and social distancing

Physical Distancing - Important Considerations

- In the classroom (6ft - Social Distancing includes while seated in chairs)
- In the corridors (6ft - between all contact points)
- In the restrooms (1 student at a time)
- Designated and marked traffic flow plans for entering and exiting the building to ensure social distancing and safety
- Plan for the utilization of spaces within the building for special and extracurricular activities to ensure health and safety and social distancing
- **Please provide a sketch of floor plan indicating the dimensions of the classrooms, location of desks, seating, etc. (See pg. 11)**
- Keep a copy of your plans available upon request.

¹ You may wish to use a separate word processing application, and then copy and paste your plan into the text box

² See page 46 of the [Diocese of Joliet - Phased Re-Opening Plan](#)

Health and Safety Action Plan

Please describe your plan:

Temperature Monitoring - Important Considerations

- Temperature monitoring of each student / adult / volunteer, who will do this? How and when?
- How will you document and store this information?
- If a someone has a temperature³ (higher than 100.0) what are the next steps? Who needs to be notified? Pastor? Principal (is shared spaces)? Parents?
- If someone has tested positive for COVID what are the next steps? Who needs to be notified? Pastor? Principal (is shared spaces)? Parents?

Disinfection Practices / Monitoring - Important Considerations

- Hand sanitizing / washing hands before class & leaving class
- Hand sanitizers at key locations throughout the facility? Classrooms? Offices? Common spaces?
- Hand washing after using the bathrooms?
- Disinfecting the classrooms? Disinfecting the common spaces?
- Disinfecting the high traffic/high contact (touch) areas
- Disposal of used masks? Wipes? Gloves?
- How will you procure disinfecting supplies? Can programs collaborate in sharing supplies?
- Should facility cleaning schedules be adjusted to accommodate the best use of the facilities and resources?
- Keep a copy of your plans available upon request.

³ See pages 19-20 of the [Diocese of Joliet - Phased Re-Opening Plan](#)

Scheduling and Staffing Action Plan

Please describe your plan:

Staffing - Important Considerations

- How will you ensure vulnerable staff protections are in place?
- Do you have built in redundancies and back up staffing plans for personnel in case of illness?
- Does staff understand they should stay home if not feeling well? As health and safety are our highest priority
- What is your process for staff to safely return?
- Do you have alternating schedules/meeting days to minimize cross-exposure?
- How will we train staff? Keep staff up to date on compliances?
- Which grades will return first? Will you have a staggered restart?
- What are the expectations for the staff? Catechists? Volunteers?
- Keep a copy of your plans available upon request.

Considerations for Concerned Parents

- How do you plan to accommodate children whose parents are not comfortable with in- person sessions?
- Is the staff trained to support this format?

Traffic Flow: Arrival and Departure Plan

Please describe your plan:



Arrival and Departure Strategies - Important Considerations

- Clear signage in multiple locations indicating uni-directional movement of students in all areas
- Clear communication to parents, staff, volunteers regarding arrival and dismissal process
- How will you stagger / control arrival & dismissal schedules to minimize cross-exposures?
- Are there special dismissal protocols for students with special needs?
- No unnecessary / unauthorized personnel should be permitted in any of the program spaces
- Signage that reminds everyone of social distancing & wearing of masks
- **Please provide a sketch or floor plan indicating the flow of traffic with location of doors and all exits as well as the dimensions of the hallways, corridors etc. (See pg. 11)**
- Keep a copy of your plans available upon request.

Special Needs Action Plan

Please describe your plan:

Special Needs - Important Considerations

- Personal interview with family if child's disability puts him/her at increased risk and discuss other options for formation, ongoing socializing, etc.
- Initial walk-through with parent and child to see if child is capable of social distancing, keeping mask on etc.
- Provision for at-home or virtual learning if child is unable to practice safety procedures
- Sanitizing procedures for any shared manipulative or individual non-shared sets of materials
- Training of aides to provide contact-less assistance, more-frequent hand sanitizing
- Do you have plan for the arrival/dismissal/transitioning between classes in place for those with special needs?

Considerations for Concerned Parents

- How do you plan to accommodate children whose parents are not comfortable with in-person sessions – especially in the Fall? In any of your programs?



Office of Youth Formation

Program Reopening Data Sheet

(You must submit a separate sheet for each ministerial program: i.e. Religious Education, Youth Ministry (HS & JRH), Confirmation-(if outside of RE), R.E.A.C.H., Dead Theologians Society, Alpha, VBS, etc.)

Parish

Location: _____

Pastor

Contact # _____

Director

Contact # _____

Re-Opening Team Members:

Name of Program Re-Opening:

(Check one)

Grades: K-8

Number of Students: _____

Grades: 6-8

Number of Students: _____

Grades: 9-12

Number of Students: _____

Grades:

Number of Students: _____

Grades:

Number of Students: _____

Number of Catechists

Number of Volunteers

Parish/Program Website

Social Media

Do not write below this line

Do not write below this line

Do not write below this line

Do not write below this line

Reviewed Plan: _____

Date:

Reviewed Plan: _____

Date:

Reviewed Plan: _____

Date:

Approved

Returned for Revision

DIAGRAMS or FLOOR PLANS:

Use this form to provide diagrams, traffic flow, etc. as required by sections. Scan and include with your submission. If you cannot scan then take a clear & readable photo and attach it in your email. Make sure all drawings are clearly labeled & identified.



ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR NEEDS:

