



The following statements are for use in the event your parish priest, a parish staff member or a parishioner tests positive for COVID-19, is exposed to someone who has tested positive or is awaiting test results. This is **NOT** a diocesan message, but rather a template statement that is to be personalized for your individual parish.

If you receive notice from your local health department that a priest/staff member/parishioner has tested positive or was exposed to someone who has, and this person has been present at Mass or any in-person parish gathering, it is recommended that you inform those who were in attendance, post a notice on your website and make an announcement before Masses. The safety of all those in our faith community is of the utmost importance. Parishes are encouraged to work in close consultation with their local and state health departments to assure appropriate recommendations and safety measures are followed.

If you have any questions regarding this type of communication, please contact Justine Lodl, Communications Director, at 920-272-8213 or jlodl@gbdioc.org or Sarah Gietman, Communications Coordinator, at 920-272-8209 or sgietman@gbdioc.org. God bless you all in your ministry.

Notice for website:

Example #1 – A positive test

(Name of Parish/Parishes) (was/were) notified **(Day of week), (Date)** that **(Name of Priest/staff member/parishioner)** has tested positive for COVID 19. **(NOTE: we do not name the staff members or the parishioners for privacy purposes)** **(Father/staff member /parishioner)** is in isolation and is self-monitoring until **(he/they) (is/are)** no longer able to spread COVID-19 to others. **(Father/staff member/parishioner)** is cooperating fully with local health officials in the tracing process. If you are experiencing any symptoms, please contact your medical provider and consider being tested. We will continue to strongly encourage everyone to take the precautions of wearing masks, observing social distancing, frequent hand hygiene, and sanitizing and disinfecting common areas and high touch surfaces. Please keep **(Father/staff member/parishioner)** in your prayers for **(his/their)** return to health.

Example #2 – Exposure to person who tested positive

(Name of Parish/Parishes) was notified **(Day of week), (Date)** that **(Father/staff member/parishioner)** was exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19 (outside/inside) of our parish community. **(NOTE: we do not name the staff members or the parishioners for privacy purposes)** **(Father/staff member)** is self-quarantined for 14 days with an estimated return date of **(Date)** **(This would apply to Father and staff. Eliminate this line if it is a parishioner).** **(Father/staff/parishioner)** is cooperating fully with local health officials in the tracing process. If you are experiencing any symptoms, please contact your medical provider and consider being tested. We will continue to strongly encourage everyone to take the precautions of wearing masks, observing social distancing, frequent hand hygiene, and sanitizing and disinfecting common areas and high touch surfaces. Please keep **(Father/staff member/parishioner)** in your prayers for **(his/their)** overall good health.

Notice to be read at Mass:

Example #3 – A positive test

As we continue to deal with the coronavirus pandemic, we would like to share that we were notified **(Day of week), (Date)** that **(Father/staff member/parishioner)** has tested positive for COVID-19. **(NOTE: we do not name the staff members or the parishioners for privacy purposes)** **(Father/staff member/parishioner)** is isolated and will be self-monitoring until **(he/they) (is/are)** no longer able to spread COVID-19 to others. **(Father/staff member/parishioner)** is cooperating fully with local health officials in the tracing process. If you are experiencing any symptoms, please contact your medical provider and consider being tested. In keeping with the health and safety guidelines issued by the diocese, we will continue to strongly encourage everyone to take the precautions of wearing masks, observing social distancing,

frequent hand hygiene, and sanitizing and disinfecting common areas and high touch surfaces. Please keep **(Father/staff member/parishioner)** in your prayers for **(his/their)** return to health.

Example #4 – Exposure to person who tested positive)

As we continue to deal with the coronavirus pandemic, we would like to share that we were notified **(Day of week), (Date)** that **(Father/staff member/parishioner)** was exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID19 (outside/inside) our parish community. **(NOTE: we do not name the staff members or the parishioners for privacy purposes)** **(Father/staff member/parishioner)** is quarantined and monitoring for symptoms. **(Father/staff member)'s** estimated return date is **(Date)** **(This would apply to Father and staff. Eliminate this line if it is a parishioner).** **(Father/staff/parishioner)** is cooperating fully with local health officials in the tracing process. If you are experiencing any symptoms, please contact your medical provider and consider being tested. In keeping with the health and safety guidelines issued by the diocese, we will continue to strongly encourage everyone to take the precautions of wearing masks, observing social distancing, frequent hand hygiene, and sanitizing and disinfecting common areas and high touch surfaces. Please keep **(Father/staff/parishioner)** in your prayers for **(his/their)** overall good health.

Welcome Back to Mass following Father being away:

Example #5 - As we focus on Loving All God's People, All the Time, it is with grateful hearts that we welcome back Father **(Name of priest)** following his self-quarantine resulting from **(a positive test for/an exposure to)** COVID 19. Out of an abundance of caution, **(Name of Parish)** took early interventions to assure our parishioners were not in risk of exposure from the virus. Please welcome Father back when you see him and pray for the continued good health of all in our parish community.

Other examples and formats to consider:

Example #6 - If Father is self-quarantined and self-monitoring and awaiting test results: This weekend we welcome (insert name of priest filling in) to our parish. As we continue to deal with the coronavirus pandemic, we would like to share that there is a remote possibility that Father (Name of priest) was exposed to COVID 19. He was tested on Wed, July 15 for COVID-19 and his results will be available early this week. Father is feeling fine and is currently self-quarantining and self-monitoring until he receives his results. If he tests positive, he will continue to isolate and self-monitor until he is no longer able to spread COVID-19 to others. Father will cooperate fully with local health officials in the tracing process, should that become necessary. If you are experiencing any symptoms, please contact your medical provider and consider being tested. In keeping with the health and safety guidelines issued by the diocese, we will continue to strongly encourage everyone to take the precautions of wearing masks, observing social distancing, frequent hand hygiene, and sanitizing and disinfecting common areas and high touch surfaces. Please keep Father in your prayers as he awaits word on his test. We will share further information once the results are received.

Example #7 - Resurrection Catholic Parish issues the following statement regarding positive parishioner tests:

Resurrection has been notified of 4 new positive COVID cases of our community members. One was present on the Resurrection campus recently. This person was at Resurrection on the following day: Saturday July 11, 2020 at 4:00 pm Mass, South Side of Church .We will continue to take precautions in safe distancing, sanitizing, and disinfecting of common areas and high touch points. If you show any symptoms, please consider getting tested and staying home. We pray for our parishioners who are sick and we continue to pray for your health. May God bless you with peace and health.

FINAL NOTE:

In addition to sharing this message on your website and before Masses, consider adapting it to other communication channels your parish may have (a Facebook post, a note in your bulletin or email newsletter, etc.). Please remember, these are template statements that are to be personalized for your individual parish. The goal is to help parishioners feel informed and that the necessary steps are being taken, so reaching out through multiple communication methods is important in reaching as many members of your community as you can.