



## ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE

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The Diocese of Syracuse has been in consultation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and is actively following the directive of the county public health departments to ensure that all diocesan parishes, schools, ministries, and charities are responding appropriately to the spread of the coronavirus (COVID 19).

While there are currently no confirmed cases in any of the seven counties of our diocese, we are still taking every necessary precaution. If confirmed cases begin to arise, the diocese has additional plans that it will put into effect. At this time, the following are to be observed.

### **BISHOP LUCIA MANDATES ALL PARISHES, AND HIGH SCHOOL AND CAMPUS MINISTRIES TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING ADJUSTMENTS TO LITURGICAL PRACTICES:**

- Clean **surfaces** and other facilities as frequently as possible
- Avoid **coming to church** (e.g., Mass, confirmation, Lenten missions, etc.) with common symptoms of illness (e.g., fever, cough, body aches) or if vulnerable to the effects of the coronavirus (e.g., those with chronic illness, and those with immune system deficiencies) (*There is no obligation to attend Mass when ill – Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2181. A dispensation has been granted by Bishop Lucia to those who are vulnerable – Code of Canon Law 1983, c. 1245*)
- Empty **holy water fonts** and keep them completely dry (*Holy water may be obtained by the faithful from a large dispenser with a tap or spout using individual bottles*)
- Refrain from the non-liturgical practice of holding hands the recitation of the **Our Father**
- Omit the **Sign of Peace** or exchange it without physical contact
- Suspend distribution of the Precious Blood of Christ from the **chalice** to the faithful
- Practice good hygiene, particularly when **distributing Holy Communion**
- Refrain from the non-liturgical practice of priests and deacons **placing hands on the heads of children or adults when blessing** those who are not receiving Communion

- Limit to the priest alone the distribution of **Holy Communion on the tongue** at the end of the communion line for those who still wish to receive in this manner
- Clean all **liturgical vessels** with soap and water after each Mass, including any pyx that is taken to a nursing home, hospital, the homebound, etc.
- **Greet priests or deacons** after Mass without physical contact

**BISHOP LUCIA STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT ALL PARISHES, AND HIGH SCHOOL AND CAMPUS MINISTRIES TAKE THE FOLLOWING LITURGICAL PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES:**

- Ensure that maintenance staff or volunteers **wipe down** pew railings, hymn books, door handles, restroom surfaces, etc. after each Mass
- Use **hand sanitizers and disinfectant wipes** as part of good hygiene practices
- Set up a secure, **stationary collection basket** where parishioners can place their offertory gifts before Mass
- Provide collection counters with **sterile gloves** when counting the offertory collection
- Receive **Holy Communion** reverently **on the hand** or approach the priest alone to receive Holy Communion on the tongue at the end of the communion line
- Take all necessary precautions when visiting the **sick or homebound**
- Refrain from visiting **those who are quarantined** due to the coronavirus (COVID19) unless by a priest for the purpose of celebrating the sacraments in danger death

**BISHOP LUCIA ASKS THOSE WHO RECEIVE A POSITIVE TEST RESULT FOR THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID19) OR HAVE BEEN IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH AN INDIVIDUAL WITH A CONFIRMED CASE TO CONTACT THE OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR TO INFORM THE DIOCESE OF THIS EXPOSURE.** In response to this information the diocese will work to implement a mitigation plan that could include the closure and cleaning of some or all facilities.