



# Archdiocese of Newark

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

March 17, 2020

Dear Brother Bishops, Priests, and Deacons,

Our Eucharistic fast continues, and we pray for its quick end. Please be assured of my continued prayers for you and for the communities we serve. During this challenging time in the life and mission of the Archdiocese of Newark, I ask for your cooperation and leadership as together we mobilize the resources and support needed to care for the faithful. Please continue to visit our COVID-19 resources page at <https://www.rcan.org/covid19> for the most up-to-date information.

I write with updated guidance for conducting your ministry considering the rapidly changing landscape of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which the Archdiocesan Coronavirus Task Force carefully assesses each day. The Task Force is comprised of clergy, religious, lay leaders, and medical professionals and partners with state and local officials to determine the most appropriate course of action in maintaining safe, healthy and environments. The justification for these decisions is a deep concern for the well-being of the faithful and wider community, especially those most at risk of serious illness or death.

## Protective Quarantine and Isolation

Please visit the CDC website for a comprehensive guide to isolation and quarantine protocols along with resources and additional information at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

For those who have had direct exposure or potential exposure to COVID-19, please carefully follow the guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) regarding isolation and quarantine protocols. Isolation “separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.” Quarantine “separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick (CDC).”

Protocol for quarantine includes:

- No physical contact with others for a period of at least 14 days
- No shared use of facilities (e.g., bathrooms) if you live with others in your rectory or home

Additionally, all Priests and Deacons with previously-arranged travel that they have not cancelled must provide the following information to their Dean and the Vicar for Clergy in writing: **1)** where you plan to go, **2)** when you plan to leave, **3)** when you plan to return. This decision is made out of concern for the health and safety of our Priests and Deacons and the communities they serve.

*Archdiocesan Center*

Dear Brother Bishops, Priests, and Deacons,  
Page 2.

## Worship

Beginning Wednesday, March 18, 2020, and until further notice, public celebration of both Sunday Mass and daily Mass is suspended. This decision comes after exhaustive discussion and with an especially heavy heart. **It is crucial that you comply with this directive to protect the faithful as well as your own health.** Public celebration of the Sacraments and other public forms of worship are suspended until further notice. This includes, but is not limited to previously scheduled Confirmations, celebrations of First Communion, penitential services, Communion services, and Liturgies of the Word. The following exceptions are permitted:

- Funerals, burial services, and previously scheduled weddings are permitted, however, attendance must be limited to a maximum of 10 participants, including the celebrant. The celebrant should consider carefully with the next of kin or wedding couple who will attend. Celebrants should also remind families that the same limitations are being applied across all relevant Archdiocesan institutions, including Catholic cemeteries.
- The Anointing of the Sick and Reconciliation will remain available, as needed. The celebrant should take every prudent precaution where indicated, such as use of gowns, masks and gloves.
- A priest may use a cotton-tipped swab or cotton ball as an instrument to anoint the sick person (cf. can. 1000 §2). The priest dips the cotton swab in the Oil for the Sick.

Parishes are encouraged to expose the Blessed Sacrament for the faithful. Clergy should continue to remind the faithful to maintain a prudent distance from one another.

Information and guidance for the Chrism Mass and Paschal Triduum will be provided in a future communication.

You are reminded

- Holy water should be removed from all fonts
- Churches are to remain open for individual prayer, however, the faithful should be encouraged to maintain a prudent distance from one another
- Any physical contact (e.g., shaking hands) must be avoided.

## Schools and other youth ministries

The State of New Jersey has mandated that all schools, including public, private, and parochial, will remain closed until it is deemed safe for students to return. All Catechetical education and events sponsored by the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) are suspended and will resume with the reopening of schools as directed by the State of NJ.

## Chancery and parish operations

The Chancery is closed to all employees beginning, tomorrow, Wednesday, March 18, 2020, until further notice. Regular updates will be provided. Our staff will be working remotely and can provide seamless support to you and the communities we serve. Please see my most recent letter, (3/13/20), for contact information for our staff matched to relevant issue-areas.

Dear Brother Bishops, Priests, and Deacons,  
Page 3.

I strongly advise that parishes suspend all office activity for a period of at least two week. Pastors may consult local officials to determine the most appropriate course of action. Parish employees who provide essential services are permitted to carry out their duties according to the determination of the Pastor.

## **Financial management**

### **Finance support for parishes and schools**

The Finance Office will provide ongoing support for its usual activities (cf. my letter 3/13/20). All full- and part-time employees should be paid, and none should be terminated. Compensation of occasional employees (e.g., music ministry) is left to the discretion of the Pastor.

The suspension of the public celebration of Masses will probably impact parish finances. Acute shortfalls that imperil the ability of an institution to meet critical needs, such as payroll, should be communicated to the Archdiocese and will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

For parishes, please contact Nancy Lystash, [nancy.lystash@rcan.org](mailto:nancy.lystash@rcan.org)  
For schools, please contact Donna Quinn, [donna.quinn@rcan.org](mailto:donna.quinn@rcan.org)

### **Vendors**

The Finance Office can provide support, if needed, with processing urgent requests from vendors.

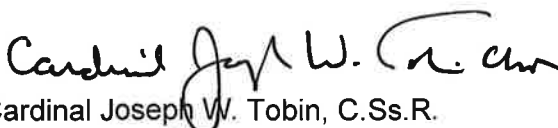
For support, please contact Matthew Phelan, [matthew.phelan@rcan.org](mailto:matthew.phelan@rcan.org).

### **Risk management & insurance services**

Standard processes should be followed for reporting claims of injury or property damage (i.e., workers' compensation, injury to non-employees, property damage/boiler & machinery, volunteer or student injuries, auto accidents). The various companies and contact information can be found on page 41 of the 2019-2020 Directory and Almanac. If you are uncertain as to whom to call, or have questions or concerns, please contact Donna Wrobel, [mailto:Donna.Wrobel@rcan.org](mailto:mailto:Donna.Wrobel@rcan.org) or (973) 497-4044.

Thank you for your continued leadership during this challenging time. I will continue to provide you with regular updates as additional information becomes available.

Sincerely yours in Christ the Redeemer,

  
Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.  
Archbishop of Newark

## Human Resources

For general Human Resources-related questions, including benefits and pension, please contact Deacon John McKenna, [John.McKenna@rcan.org](mailto:John.McKenna@rcan.org).

For Benefit-related questions, please contact Dennis Miller, [Dennis.Miller@rcan.org](mailto:Dennis.Miller@rcan.org) (973) 497-4095 or Maria Joyner, [Maria.Joyner@rcan.org](mailto:Maria.Joyner@rcan.org) or (973) 497-4092.

For Pension-related question, please contact Tom Murphy, [Thomas.Murphy@rcan.org](mailto:Thomas.Murphy@rcan.org) (973) 497-4239 or Elena Skinner, [Elena.Skinner@rcan.org](mailto:Elena.Skinner@rcan.org) (973) 497-4089.

Below is the **REMINDER message**

The following HR procedures and payment of wages are in effect for all locations throughout the Archdiocese to include Parishes, Schools, and Chancery.

- If after reviewing the procedures you have any questions, please contact the HR department directly by phone or email to [Archdiocese-of-Newark-Benefits@rcan.org](mailto:Archdiocese-of-Newark-Benefits@rcan.org).
- If you have a financial question making the actual payroll to eligible employees, contact the Finance department: Nancy Lystash (973) 497-4074 or Heidi Kopala (973) 497-4078.

### **THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES ARE IN EFFECT FOR ALL ARCHDIOCESAN PARISHES, SCHOOLS AND CHANCERY**

#### **1. Employees who are absent from work due to periodic illness or injury, including the Coronavirus**

If you will be absent from work as a result of any illness or injury, you should follow the procedures and policies currently in place which include:

- Contact your Supervisor if you will be unable to report to work due to any injury or illness.
- Periodic absences or the first 5 consecutive calendar workdays of any illness will be paid by using available or accrued PTO days (based on your PTO entitlement for 2020).
- If you are unable to report to work for three (3) consecutive workdays, you will need a physician's note before you can return to work.
- For absences that extend beyond 7 consecutive calendar days, the employee will be eligible to apply for Short-Term-Disability (STD).
- As a reminder, any time you will be out of work for illness or injury it is necessary to keep your Supervisor informed of your health status.

#### **2. Employees who are quarantined, have a person living within the same household who is quarantined, OR has a child where the school or day care has closed due to the Coronavirus.**

Should an employee fall into this category AND can provide their Supervisor and Chancery HR with acceptable verification of the event, the following procedures will be put into effect:

- Employees with internet and phone capability will be required to complete as much of their normal duties as possible from home.
- It is strongly recommended that If an employee is unable to complete normal work duties from home (lack of computer access or normal work duties do not require a computer), the Supervisor should still require the employee to, among other things; respond remotely to voice mail (if applicable), informing the Supervisor of any important calls or email that need a response and check in by phone with the Supervisor at least daily.
- Full-time and regularly scheduled part-time employees (this would NOT include "Per Diem" employees, including Cantors or choir members who normally only provide services when a Mass is scheduled). The eligible full-time and regularly scheduled part-time employees will be paid their normal daily wage during this period for up to a maximum of 14 consecutive calendar days, or for the period the quarantine lasts, or school/daycare is closed, whichever is shorter. Pay in this event WILL NOT be charged against the employees available or accrued PTO.
- Should a quarantine period extend beyond 14 consecutive calendar days, a determination regarding pay will be made at that time and will be communicated to the employee.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Employees who self-quarantine will be required to use available PTO for payment of any wages during the self-quarantine period.

**3. Temporary Telecommuting.**

In special circumstances, the Chancery may close the office and/or request employees to work from home. These requests are intended to be short in duration and temporary rather than permanent. In the event the Chancery requests an employee to work from home, the following will apply:

- Employees with internet and phone capability will be required to complete as much of their normal duties as possible from home.
- It is strongly recommended that If an employee is unable to complete normal work duties from home (lack of computer access or normal work duties do not require a computer), the Supervisor should still require the employee to, among other things; respond remotely to voice mail (if applicable), informing the Supervisor of any important calls or email that need a response and check in by phone with the Supervisor at least daily.
- Full-time and regularly scheduled part-time employees (*this would NOT include* "Per Diem" employees, including Cantors or choir members who normally only provide services when a Mass is scheduled). The eligible full-time and regularly scheduled part-time employees will be paid their normal daily wage during this period for up to a maximum of 14 consecutive calendar days, or for the period the quarantine lasts, or school/daycare is closed, whichever is shorter. Pay in this event WILL NOT be charged against the employees available or accrued PTO.
- Should the Chancery extend the work from home period beyond 14 consecutive calendar days, a determination regarding pay will be made at that time and will be communicated to employees.