



ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

*Cardinal Rigali Center
20 Archbishop May Drive
St. Louis, Missouri 63119*

Office of Sacred Worship
p) 314.792.7231
f) 314.792.7239
worship@archstl.org

MEMORANDUM

TO: All priests and deacons
FROM: Father Nicholas Smith
DATE: 17 March 2020
RE: Holy Communion and the Spread of COVID-19

Yesterday, you received a letter from Archbishop Carlson detailing various liturgical/sacramental mandates, among others, to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

One of the mandates regarding Holy Communion was not clearly stated in that communication and has caused some confusion for many of you. I want to apologize if this lack of clarity has added even more uncertainty during this particularly difficult time.

Moving forward, the following mandates are to apply to the celebration of Mass and the distribution of Holy Communion:

- All public Masses are to cease immediately. There is no exception to this directive. The dispensation which the Archbishop offered to all Catholics in our archdiocese from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass is extended to April 5, at the earliest.
- Churches are to remain open for personal prayer, devotions, and confessions.
- Holy Communion may still be administered by clergy and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to those who are seriously ill or in danger of death, only. Be sure to follow proper protocols for handwashing and the use of masks or other protective coverings.

Priests and deacons are encouraged to live-stream Masses celebrated in the parish, if at all possible. If that is not possible, please refer your parishioners to the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Louis website: <http://cathedralstl.org/live/>. The Cathedral Basilica is live-streaming the 8 am weekday Mass and the 10 am Sunday Mass.

Also, please encourage and assist your parishioners to make an act of Spiritual Communion uniting themselves worthily to our Lord's true presence in the Most Holy Eucharist through prayer. Please share information with your parishioners on your website, or other means, regarding how to make a

Spiritual Communion. You may want to use the following resource developed by the Office of Sacred Worship. Please see below.

The Archdiocese of St. Louis and the Office of Sacred Worship will continue to support you, and we ask for your continued prayers and support in return.

We currently find ourselves in a challenging and rapidly developing time, through the intercession of Mary, Health of the Sick and our Mother, may the Lord of all love and compassion fill us with His peace.

Spiritual Communion and Prayer Resources

As the spiritual leaders of our parishes we are including below several resources that can be used and shared with your parishioners during this time to encourage ways they can stay connected through prayer. While it is certainly difficult to be unable to celebrate Mass as a parish, there are many other things we can be doing during this time to stay sacramentally connected. Along with the directives and mandates already set forth from the Archbishop, following are several resources that you may find beneficial.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Receiving the Blessed Sacrament in the Eucharist is the source and summit of our Catholic faith, but during these unprecedented times and to ensure the health and safety of all people, it is not possible to receive the Sacrament during this time. However, there are still opportunities to draw close to Christ and unite with the Church during these difficult times.

“The Church obliges the faithful "to take part in the Divine Liturgy on Sundays and feast days" and, prepared by the sacrament of Reconciliation, to receive the Eucharist at least once a year, if possible during the Easter season.”

--Catechism of the Catholic Church §1389

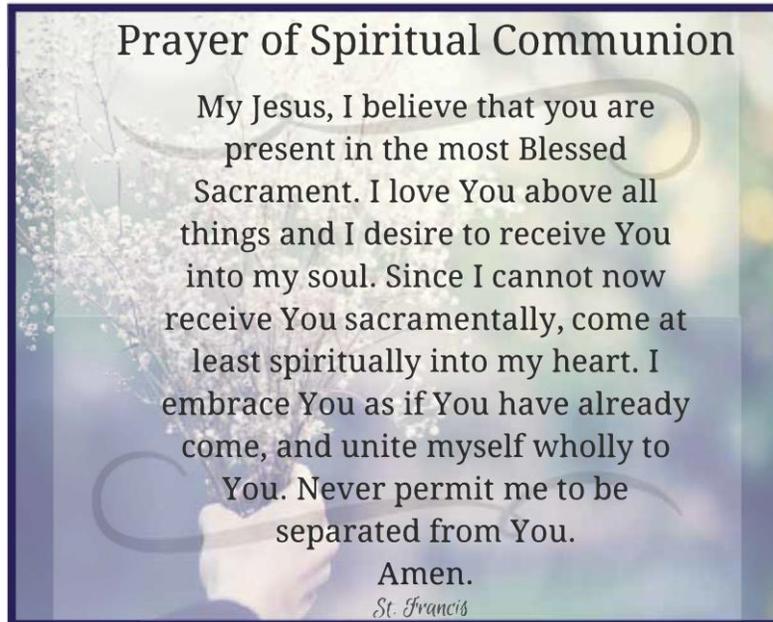
While we are unable to receive the Blessed Sacrament during the next several weeks, we can take the opportunity to participate in Mass online, reflect on scripture, and engage in further spiritual reading. One excellent way to receive the blessings bestowed upon us is through a Spiritual Communion. Below is a copy of the prayer that can be used or distributed amongst the faithful.

PRAYER RESOURCES

- **MAGNIFICAT:**
 - Their online version is being made temporarily available to everyone for free: www.magnificat.com/free
 - Free temporary access is also available in Spanish: www.magnificat.com/gratis
- Give Us This Day: <https://giveusthisday.org/Free>.
- Prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe: https://youtu.be/M-KF_ZxbkD4?list=PLpTzvCOJa7DCHIfdjcDiaydw7XUGHYQOE

SCRIPTURE & SPIRITUAL READING

- Daily Readings: <http://uscgb.org/calendar/index.cfm?showLit=1&action=month>
- Catechism online: <http://ccc.uscgb.org/flipbooks/catechism/index.html> or http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM



It is our hope that during these unprecedented weeks ahead it will be a time of prayer, reflection, and spiritual growth amongst your parish families. We must continue to encourage those we lead to spend time in silence in conversation with our Lord. Only He can carry us through these times. We must take up our cross and unite in prayer together.