



The Prevention & Response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic In the Diocese of Columbus

PREVENTION

Individual Prevention Measures

Individually and communally, we are called to practice and follow “common-sense” measures to help prevent the Coronavirus, and other types of respiratory borne illnesses such as the flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have given the following guidelines to help prevent the spread of respiratory borne illnesses:

1. Practice “social –distancing”: Bishop Brennan has given a dispensation for Sunday Mass Obligation the weekends of March. This means you may stay home from Mass and other church activities. This is especially important to maintain if you are feeling ill, are a care-giver, or your immune system is compromised (i.e. cancer patients). If you choose not to attend Mass, you are not committing a sin. The Diocese has provided ways to incorporate prayer and the Daily Mass Readings into your and your family’s life on our website. There is also information about opportunities to attend Mass virtually.
2. Cover your face when you cough and/or sneeze with a tissue. Respiratory droplets can go as far as 6 feet in the air. Ensure that you always carry tissues with you. If you forget, you should cough and/or sneeze into your sleeve. Make sure to discard the tissue appropriately in the trash. If you use your sleeve, wash your clothes in hot water and use bleach if appropriate.
3. Wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds using soap and water, (sing Happy Birthday twice). This is especially important after coughing, sneezing, blowing your nose or using the bathroom.
4. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizers if you do not have access to soap and water. (Hand sanitizers need to be at least 60% alcohol-based to be effective.)
5. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using regular household cleaning products.

PRECAUTIONS

Liturgical Precautions

As a community of faith, we are called forth in charity to care for one another and do everything possible to help prevent the spread of illness. In this spirit, we make the following recommendations.

1. The distribution of the Precious Blood is suspended until further notice. The Church teaches that we receive the fullness of the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Consecrated Host.

2. All physical signs of peace such as a handshake, a hug, etc. are suspended until further notice. It is very appropriate to recognize one another with a nod of the head, saying/mouthing “Peace be with you” or waving.
3. Congregants should refrain from holding hands during the “Our Father”.
4. Drain and thoroughly clean all Holy Water fonts with an antimicrobial wipe such as Clorox or Lysol. Do not refill Holy Water fonts. They are to remain empty until further directives are given. You may want to have small bottles of Holy Water available for persons to take for individual use.
5. Pay special attention to Missals, hymnbooks, church bulletins and other paper materials. Dispose of any that look stained or dirty. This is especially important if they cannot be wiped down with an antimicrobial cleaner such as Clorox or Lysol.
6. Clergy and Extra-Ordinary Ministers of the Eucharist should be diligent to clean their hands with an alcohol hand sanitizer prior to and after distributing the Precious Body.
7. While not mandated, it is highly suggested that you refrain from receiving Communion on the tongue during this time. However, if you chose not to change your practice, please make sure to open your mouth wide and stick out your tongue so the Priest or Extra-Ordinary Minister does not have to stick their fingers inside your mouth.

PRAYERS

We are a Universal Church, and the Church throughout the world is dealing with the same issues and concerns that we are here in Ohio. The following Prayers for the Faithful/Universal Prayer suggestions are noted below. Please feel free to use them in your liturgies:

- For those who are suffering from the current outbreak of sickness. May God in his mercy grant healing; let us pray to the Lord.
- For the souls of the faithful who have died from this illness in recent weeks; May God welcome them to His Kingdom of Peace and Healing and grant consolation to those mourning them; let us pray to the Lord.
- For scientists, health professionals, public officials and all serving the common good during this difficult and uncertain time. May they be filled with wisdom and understanding; let us pray to the Lord.
- That during this time of uncertainty, our merciful and loving Father will strengthen our faith and trust in his goodness and divine providence; let us pray to the Lord.
- That our compassionate Father would touch our communities during this outbreak with healing and peace; let us pray to the Lord.

Please email any additional questions or concerns regarding liturgical and/or sacramental protocols to the Office for Divine Worship (litmailbox@columbuscatholic.org or mlemiesz@columbuscatholic.org). Additional communication will be communicated and posted as they develop on the Diocesan webpage.