

# Holy Family Catholic Church

*Office for Religious Education*

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March 10, 2020

Dear Parents of our PREP Children:

Please read this letter in its entirety as we want all to be clear about our program policies especially given concerns regarding COVID19. Last week the Archdiocese of Washington issued a statement about steps that parishes should take to help reduce the spread of this virus. In summary:

- Refrain from shaking hands during the Sign of Peace (bow/verbal gesture is appropriate)
- Refrain from holding hands during the Lord's Prayer
- Cease distribution of the Precious Blood (Christ is fully present under both species)  
Remove Holy Water from the Holy Water fonts
- Strongly urge the faithful to receive the Holy Eucharist only in their hands instead of on the tongue to mitigate any transmission of saliva
- Priests, Deacons and Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist (EMHC) should practice good hand hygiene washing their hands before Mass and using hand sanitizer, available in a discreet location near the sanctuary, to cleanse hands before and after the distribution of Holy Communion. Our EMHCs wash their hands right before they come out to assist.
- Further, anyone who is ill, or suspects he or she is ill, should refrain from participation in public activities, including Mass. If a person refrains from Sunday Mass due to illness, they are dispensed from the Sunday obligation.

We also received communication from the Office of Catechesis which governs our parish religious education programs to share this information and to encourage catechetical leaders to also take steps to protect parishioners and the children in our programs.

We plan to continue holding religious education classes but will enforce the following precautions:

- If your child is sick, please keep him/her home. No one that is visibly sick will be permitted to attend classes. This would include excessive coughing, runny noses. Please see bullet six above.
- Children should wash their hands prior to coming to class and are encouraged to wash them after classes have ended. Due to this request and the number of available sinks in the bathroom, tardy arrivals will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- If Prince George's County schools close due to the coronavirus, our classes will be cancelled as well. Notifications will be given via Flocknote and posted on the parish website.

- Our attendance policy of no more than 8 absences will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Should your child miss a class, they have a syllabus to follow which can be found on the front of their 3 ring binder and also on the Religious Education page of our website: <https://holyfamilywoodmore.org/religious-education>

It is not our intent to create panic but to instill reasonable practices that will hopefully benefit everyone. Let's work together. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at the phone number or email listed above or Father Joe at 301-249-2266.

Respectfully,



Pamela A. Rozanski

DRE