



THE DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO

Renew Faith • Build Communion • Inspire Hope

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

In light of the continued progression of the coronavirus COVID-19, and in keeping with our need to protect all God's people, Bishop Bradley has directed the following steps be implemented at the Parishes:

Parish Programming:

1. All non-essential Parish programs are to be postponed through Easter Sunday, April 12. These include social gatherings, Council meetings, etc. Bishop Bradley's parish visits through April 12 have been postponed and will be rescheduled at a later date.
2. All Catholic schools and Religious education classes are to be temporarily suspended through Easter Sunday, April 12.
3. The celebration of the Sacraments, including the Sacrament of Penance, Baptism, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick, Funerals and Eucharistic Adoration certainly should continue, with the addition of following the below guidelines, and should be kept under 100 people.

The Mass:

1. **Bishop Bradley has given a general dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass through April 12. While this suspends the faithful's obligation to attend Mass, all regularly scheduled liturgies will remain open to the public for those who wish to attend.**
2. Any faithful experiencing signs of illness should stay home. It is not a sin to avoid Mass in order to protect others from the potential spread of illness.
3. The practice of shaking hands during the Sign of Peace or elsewhere is to be suspended. A verbal sign of peace can be applied offered instead. The faithful should also refrain from holding hands during the recitation of the Our Father.
4. The distribution of the Precious Blood during all Masses will be temporarily suspended. Please remember the Consecrated Host is the full Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ and receiving the Consecrated Host alone achieves full Communion with Christ.
5. Prayerfully discern receiving the Sacred Host in the hand rather than on the tongue, though the faithful always have the right to receive Holy Communion on the tongue.
6. Ensure that all holy water fonts are emptied and cleaned after each Mass, and then replenished and blessed.
7. Priests, deacons and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion should continue to practice good hygiene, washing their hands before Mass begin and before and after distributing Holy Communion.
8. All parishes are asked to add a special Prayer of the Faithful at each Mass in regard to this public health crisis.

Pastors are encouraged to assess local situations and make adjustments as needed.

We will continue to monitor the situation, and advise of any further steps that we might need to take as they develop.