As a strictly precautionary measure and out of an abundance of concern and caution, Bishop Jeffrey M. Monforton has decided that, effective immediately:

1. The shaking of hands during the exchange of the sign of peace will be suspended in the Diocese of Steubenville. Pastors may either a) omit the exchange of the sign of peace so that at the proper place in the Communion Rite, the priest would still say "the peace of the Lord be with you always," and the people would respond "and with your spirit," which would conclude the sign of peace, or b) the people may say "peace be with you" to those around them and, for example, bow their heads to that person but not make physical contact.

2. Distribution of the Precious Blood to the faithful via the chalice will be suspended (with the exception of a chalice that may be needed for those with celiac disease). It may be necessary to remind the faithful that the Body and Blood of Christ are present in each Species so that when they receive only the Host, they are still receiving the Body and Blood of Christ. The following are two references you may find useful:

   "Christ is present whole and entire in each of the species and whole and entire in each of their parts, in such a way that the breaking of the bread does not divide Christ." Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1377.

   "...the body, too, exists under the species of wine, the blood under the species of bread, and the soul under both species in virtue of the natural connection and concomitance by which the parts of Christ the Lord, who has already risen from the dead to die no more [cf. Rom 6:9], are united together. Moreover, the divinity is present because of its admirable hypostatic union with the body and the soul." The Council of Trent (Denzinger, 1640) as cited in no. 10 of Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America.

Bishop Monforton directs that these two precautionary measures be undertaken at all Masses in the Diocese of Steubenville immediately and remain in place until further notice.