



March 1, 2020

The news of recent weeks has been dominated with stories about the Coronavirus. Understandably, this caused concern among parishioners regarding some of the Catholic Church's Mass procedures. At present, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), believe that the risk to the public is low. However, they are encouraging everyone to be prepared should the situation change and the Coronavirus becomes more widespread.

I ask parishioners to use their best judgment regarding Mass attendance. When an individual is too sick to attend Mass, his/her Sunday obligation is dispensed. One can worship by participating in the Mass for shut ins on TV. More information about TV or online options can be found in a PDF at <https://spxbowie.org/mass-times>.

No one is obliged to shake hands during the Sign of Peace at Mass. He/she can simply turn to those nearest and say "Peace be with you". A slight bow or simple wave also suffices. We ask all our Eucharistic ministers to carry hand sanitizer and practice good hygiene if they do shake hands at the Sign of Peace. This is good practice for all our parishioners to follow during the cold/flu season. Hand sanitizer dispensers can be found on the tables at the exits of church. Health experts encourage people to cough or sneeze into a handkerchief or tissue or into one's elbow; never into one's hands.

Regarding receiving from the cup at communion time, remember that Christ is fully present in both the Host and Precious Blood. We ask those with a cold (or who think they may be coming down with one) to refrain from receiving from the cup.

We will continue to monitor the situation and follow the guidance of health professionals and the Archdiocese. Please join me in praying for the sick and those affected by the Coronavirus.

Sincerely,

**Fr. Mike Jones**

Pastor, St. Pius X Church