



# ARCHDIOCESE OF SANTA FE

The Catholic Center

## Memorandum

**Attention:** All Archdiocesan Entities and to the People of God  
**From:** Very Reverend Glennon Jones, Vicar General  
**Date:** March 12, 2020  
**Re:** Archdiocesan Disease Response

The following are directives/recommendations promulgated because of the current epidemiological situation.

### **I. Preventive Measures – Effective Immediately**

1. Proper Hygiene per Center for Disease Control guidelines:
  - a. Clean your hands often. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - b. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
  - c. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
  - d. Cover coughs and sneezes. When a tissue is not readily available, covering of the mouth and nose with the bend of the arm when sneezing or coughing
  - e. Frequent cleaning and sterilization of surfaces like desktops, keyboards, phone receivers, doorknobs etc.
  - f. Stay home if you are sick.

Acknowledgement and adherence to recommendations of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) of the U.S. Public Health Service <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> and the New Mexico Department of Health <http://cv.nmhealth.org/> specific to a viral or bacterial outbreak. **If you suspect you have been exposed, call the New Mexico Coronavirus Hotline: 1- 855-600-3453.**

### **II. Operational Response: These instructions are effective immediately and until rescinded or modified.**

*As of Wednesday, March 11 a state of emergency has been declared by the Governor Lujan Grisham because of the determined health risk of the COVID 19 pandemic. The following will serve as the Archdiocesan response procedure. These directives will remain in effect until further notice. Please note these directives may change at any time.*

### **Archdiocesan Schools - Directives**

1. Operations of Archdiocesan schools will follow the response procedure of their public school counterparts, on a county-by-county basis.
  - a. Public school corporation closures for the purposes of disease prevention in a county containing an Archdiocesan school will result in that Archdiocesan school's closure.
  - b. Follow all recommendations made by local or state Health Departments that apply to schools.
2. In the instances where an Archdiocesan school closure occurs on the basis of disease prevention:
  - a. Employee compensation will follow the 'Inclement Weather' policy.
  - b. Custodial staff will be provided all necessary safety wear and cleaning materials to conduct a disinfecting/deep clean of the premises prior to the reopening of the school.
3. All schools should be prepared for implementation of extended "inclement weather" type learning days and makeups as necessary.

### **Archdiocesan Parish Offices - Recommendations**

1. Parish offices in parishes with a parochial school, follow the operational schedule of the school.
2. Parish offices in parishes without a parochial school should follow the response procedure of their county's public-school system.
3. In the instances where a parish office closure occurs on the basis of disease prevention:
  - a. Employee compensation will follow the 'Inclement Weather' policy.
  - b. Custodial staff will be provided all necessary safety wear and cleaning materials to conduct a disinfecting/deep clean of the premises prior to the reopening of the parish.

### **The Catholic Center - Directives**

1. Regardless of the operational capacity of Bernalillo County parishes and schools, The Catholic Center will remain operational as the Emergency Management Headquarters of the Archdiocese.
2. Decisions to close The Catholic Center will be made by the Archbishop in conversation with the Vicar General and Chancellor.
3. In the event The Catholic Center closes for disease prevention, essential personnel will be available onsite or remotely:
  - a. Essential personnel include:
    - 1) Vicar General
    - 2) Executive Directors
    - 3) Human Resources Director
    - 4) General Services Director
  - b. All other salary-exempt personnel will work remotely to the extent possible.
  - c. Employee compensation will follow the 'Inclement Weather' policy.

### **III. Travel Restrictions**

1. In instances where Archdiocesan entities are on alert but have not yet closed as a preventive measure, it is highly recommended that professional travel be limited. Professional travel to national-level events and to areas more severely impacted by the viral/bacterial outbreak should be cancelled.
2. In instances where an Archdiocesan school is closed as a preventive measure, professional travel by staff at that school is prohibited.
3. In instances where a parish or other Archdiocesan location is closed as a preventive measure, professional travel by staff at that parish or location is strongly discouraged.

### **IV. Liturgical Considerations**

Beyond liturgical restrictions already issued, Masses should continue to be celebrated as per the regular schedules. Should the NM or County Health Depts. or Governor's office advise the closing of schools and other public facilities, this will be re-evaluated. Pastors are allowed wide latitude in their decisions to close their churches even earlier in the absence of specific direction from the Archdiocese; however, pastors should close their churches and facilities once so advised by the Archdiocese.

All persons should be strongly urged to stay home if they are ill, elderly or if they have compromised immune systems. Persons with infants and young children are also advised to avoid large gatherings. All of these and their caregivers are assured that they are dispensed by the Archbishop from the weekly obligation of attending Mass until the current situation is alleviated, as are those who may simply be fearful of possible contagion for themselves and/or their families.

Pastors of souls and others should encourage those who are not attending Mass to watch Mass on television and/or read the readings of the day with their families, meditating on the Word of God and its application towards the two great commandments of loving God with whole heart, and loving our neighbors as ourselves.

- V. **Other Discretion**: The postponing/cancellation of large events, non-essential events and meetings, and school events and activities is recommended. **When in doubt, err on the side of caution.**

Please disseminate this information as widely as possible.