



## ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SYRACUSE

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The Diocese of Syracuse is currently monitoring the situation regarding the coronavirus. At this time, there is no need to curtail or suspend any practices at Mass. Nevertheless, the following are provided for your consideration.

### **THE CHURCH'S LITURGICAL RESPONSE TO INFLUENZA**

**Mass attendance is not obligatory for those who are ill** (*Code of Canon Law 1983*, c. 898; *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)*, 2181). Those who are ill not only can but should remain at home and participate – as they are able – by watching a broadcast of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on TV or YouTube and by making a spiritual communion.

**Those at Mass concerned they may be getting ill are encouraged to:** (1) refrain from extending hands at the Sign of Peace (some other appropriate gesture may be extended instead – e.g., a smile or nod of the head), (2) receive Holy Communion in the hand rather than on the tongue, and (3) refrain from receiving the Precious Blood from the chalice.

**Those who distribute Holy Communion** (i.e., priest, deacon, extraordinary minister of Holy Communion) are to practice good hygiene, particularly by washing their hands before and after the distribution of Holy Communion. They should also take care not to touch the hand or tongue of any communicant.

**The pastor of a parish may decide to suspend the distribution of the Precious Blood from the chalice.** It is important to remember that the whole Christ is truly present, body, blood, soul, and divinity, under each of the species of bread and wine (*CCC*, 1390). Pastors may also decide to suspend the sign of peace and / or the use of holy water fonts.

**Holy water fonts** should be cleaned, and the water changed on a regular basis.

### **A JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE USCCB, CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES, AND THE CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES:**

“As communities and public health officials respond to the outbreak of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in China and closely monitor its presence and progression in other parts of the world, **we join in solidarity and prayer for those impacted or working to treat those infected by the disease.** The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Relief Services, and the Catholic Health Association of the United States hope that governments will work together in partnership to improve all nations’ capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to this virus.”