Memo

From: Michael Schmitz - Director, Liturgy & Worship
To: Priests and Deacons
Date: 3/17/2020
Re: Liturgical Directives during COVID-19 crisis

When private liturgical functions are permitted according to our Guidelines for Particular Celebrations and public health directives, the following are to be observed:

In general:

- While a celebration is taking place in the church, the church building is not to be open to the public for prayer. Funerals, weddings, and baptisms are to occur with only immediate family present, with numbers limited in accord with public health guidelines and directives.
- Anyone who is ill or not feeling well, is not to attend. If the presider is ill a substitute should be found or the event must be postponed.
- Shared paper resources (hymnals, missalettes, multi-use worship aids, etc.) should not be used or available in the pews. OneLicense.net is offering free music reprint licenses through April 15, if a parish wishes to create single-use worship aids.
- To the extent possible, those present should try to keep at least an arm’s length away from others in the assembly.
- Holy Water fonts/stoups should be emptied.
- Parishes should make use of options which will shorten the celebration.
- The church should be sanitized before and after the liturgy.
- In greeting the faithful priests and ministers should maintain a respectful distance, acknowledge greetings, but refrain from any physical contact.

At Masses celebrated privately in the course of marriage or funeral rites:

- Communion of the faithful is not given from the chalice.
- The faithful are strongly encouraged to receive Holy Communion in the hand.
- Clergy must wash their hands before Mass begins and use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after distributing Holy Communion. If physical contact is made with a communicant, they should pause and sanitize their hands again before continuing to distribute Communion.
- The exchange of the sign of peace is to be omitted.
- The faithful should not hold hands during the Our Father.
- Priests may remind the faithful that they are under no obligation to receive Holy Communion every time they attend Mass (cf. canon 920).