



St. John Neumann Catholic Church

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ATTENTION ALL LITURGICAL MINISTERS!

FLU Virus and Liturgical Celebrations

Along with the recommendations of the Center for Disease Control, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops strongly recommends that the following precautionary measures be taken at liturgical celebrations.

The flu virus is transmitted by airborne droplets and by contact. It is best that those who are sick not attend Mass or other large gatherings. To miss Mass when one is ill is never a sin. Distribution of the chalice of Precious Blood to communicants will be temporarily suspended.

- Ordinary (priests and deacons) and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion should "wash" their hands before and after distributing. We will provide pumps of antibacterial gel in the pews and at the credence table, so all ministers will clean their hands before gathering around the altar.
- Hospitality Ministers (Greeters and Ushers) should be encouraged to carefully wash their hands and/or use hand sanitizer (with 60% or more alcohol) before and after their ministries of greeting others, taking up the collection, and passing out bulletins at the end of Mass.
- In lieu of a handshake at the Sign of Peace at Mass, people may smile and make a small bow of the head to others as a sign of reverence.
- In lieu of holding hands at the Lord's Prayer, people may pray with hands folded, or extended in the traditional posture known as the *orans* gesture.
- Altar servers should wash their hands before setting the altar.
- If non-communicants come forward for a blessing, the blessing should be given with a hand on the shoulder, not the head.
- No handshakes should be exchanged when the gifts are received.
- All ministers of the altar should take the same precautions.
- Accommodations should be made for those with special needs, e.g. Celiac-Sprue.
- An announcement about the requested changes should be made before Mass begins.
- Because not everyone is present at the beginning of Mass, it will be important to include a comment about these temporary changes during the homily and/or after the Great Amen and before reciting of the Our Father.

Large containers of antibacterial gel are put in prominent places throughout the church complex.

The U.S. bishops' Committee on Divine Worship has posted on the Web a series of 10 questions and answers related to participation at Mass during the time of the swine influenza.

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacred-art-and-music/influenza-and-the-liturgy.cfm>

See also the government site: PandemicFlu.gov; it is also in Spanish

<http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/community/faithcomchecklist.html>