

Pandemic Preparation Liturgical Protocol

Archdiocese of Saint Boniface

The following protocol has been established for use in the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface. **No part or stage of this protocol is to be implemented without the specific direction and mandate of the local ordinary.**

In the event of a nation wide communicable illness, it is recommended that those with flu like symptoms absent themselves from the celebration of the Sunday Liturgy. No one with flu like symptoms should participate in a liturgical ministry.

All parishes must have a team prepared to conduct a Sunday Liturgy of the Word in the event of their priest's illness.

Stage One

The spread of virus into the general population where people who have chronic/acute stages of illness are at high-risk.

I. Concerning Holy Water Fonts.

- a. Holy water fonts are to be sanitized and left empty.
- b. The sprinkling rite, in its proper liturgical order, may be used.

II. Concerning the Disinfection of Worship Space.

- a. The worship space is to be kept clean. All debris e.g. tissues, etc left behind should be removed at the conclusion of each liturgy. (It is the parish's responsibility to ensure that latex gloves are provided for those responsible for cleaning the worship space.)
- b. At the conclusion of each liturgy, the worship space could be disinfected with a disinfecting spray.

III. Concerning Hand Sanitizing.

- a. Hand sanitizing stations (non-alcohol based) should be established at each entrance of the church.
- b. Those preparing the elements for communion must ensure proper personal hygiene and cleanliness.
- c. Communion ministers must, at some discreet location, sanitize their hands before the distribution of communion.

IV. Concerning the Rite of Peace.

The Rite of Peace, with the words; “Peace be with you”, is not to be understood as a greeting but rather a proclamation of a gift given. Peace is the first gift of the Risen Lord, and this gesture expresses the faith that this gift is now present in his people.

The gesture of peace ratifies the very gift made present in the Eucharistic Event. As bread and wine are broken on the altar, so too are the barriers that exist between individuals.

The priest may give the sign of peace to the ministers but always remains within the sanctuary, so as not disturb the celebration. (cf. Instruction of the Roman Missal par. 82 / Redemptionis Sacramentum, par.72)

The members of the assembly share the Rite of Peace only with those nearest to them and in a sober manner. (cf. Instruction of the Roman Missal, par.154 /Redemptionis Sacramentum, par.72)

This important element of the liturgy should not be omitted.

- a. The customary handshake during the sign of peace is to be substituted with a bow of the head.

V. Concerning the Reception of Communion.

It is most desirable that the faithful, just as the Priest himself is bound to do, receive the Lord’s Body from hosts consecrated in the same Mass, and that, in the instances when it is permitted, they partake of the chalice so that their reception of Communion will appear more clearly as a participation in the sacrifice actually being celebrated. (cf. Instruction of the Roman Missal, par. 85)

So that the fullness of the sign may be made more clearly evident to the faithful in the course of the Eucharistic banquet, lay members of Christ’s faithful, too, are to be admitted to communion under both kinds, in the case set forth in the liturgical books, preceded and continually accompanied by proper catechesis regarding the dogmatic principles on this matter laid down by the Ecumenical Council of Trent. (Redemptionis Sacramentum, par.100)

- a. The filling of additional ciboria with consecrated hosts is to be done by the presider/deacon only. (In the case where he has flu like symptoms, then a duly prepared communion minister may fulfil this task.)¹
- b. Chalices used for the distribution of the blood of Christ must be made of precious metals. Pottery, glass, ceramics etc. are not to be used.
 - i. Fresh purificators are to be used for each liturgy.
 - ii. The chalice is to be aggressively wiped after each communicant. Afterward it should be turned a quarter way.
 - iii. Intinction is not to be practiced.
 - iv. A generous amount of wine must be maintained in each chalice
 - v. The chalices must be thoroughly cleansed with soap and water at the conclusion of each liturgy
- c. A presider with flu like symptoms must ensure the use of his own paten and from chalice. In serious cases, he must refrain from touching the hosts and the distribution of the Body of Christ.

¹ This protocol is to assist in the limiting of hand contact with the communion wafers.

Stage Two

The spread of virus into the general population where people who have severe chronic/acute stages of illness are at high-risk. The virus begins to cause deaths in the high-risk population.

** Based on protocol established by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.*

In addition to the protocol of Stage One.

I. Concerning the Reception of Communion.

- a. Communion from the chalice is to be discontinued.
- b. The reception of Holy Communion on the tongue is to be discontinued.²

Stage Three

The virus is pervasive in all the population with all segments being at risk.

** Based on protocol established by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.*

I. Concerning Liturgical Celebrations.

- a. Parish assemblies will be limited in accordance with the directives of the civil authority. In the worst case scenario, the civil authorities may ban all public assemblies. In such an eventuality, resources for home prayer will be made available.

II. Concerning the Celebrations of Funerals and Burial.

- a. As determined by the civil authority, or if there is no direction from the civil authority, then the prayers for the deceased may be held at the place of interment.

III. Concerning Visits to the Sick at Home.

- a. Where visits to the sick for sacramental purposes and/or for pastoral care are made, good sanitary practices need to be maintained by the minister who chooses to visit. Ministers need to carry and use hand sanitizers and a mouth covering.

² This protocol is to assist in the limiting of the possibility of saliva being carried by the minister's hand from one communicant to the next.