



## BISHOP OF HAMILTON

Dear Parishioners,

March 13, 2020

As the situation regarding the COVID 19 coronavirus outbreak is changing rapidly, I wish to advise you of the following measures to be taken in the Diocese of Hamilton effective today out of an abundance of caution and concern:

### *Attendance at Mass*

Those who are ill or who experience health concerns including compromised immune systems, flu symptoms or colds, are asked to refrain from attending Mass. There is no obligation to attend Mass when you are unwell.

### *Holy Water Fonts and Stoops*

The Holy Water Fonts and Stoops at the doors of our churches will be emptied until further notice.

### *Handwashing*

Ministers of Holy Communion – Priests, Deacons and Extraordinary Ministers – must **wash your hands thoroughly** with soap and hot water before and after Mass. Provisions for this will be made in the church sacristy. Paper rather than cloth towels should be provided beside the sink.

### *Holy Communion at Mass*

Until further notice Holy Communion is to be distributed **only in the hand**. Those who prefer Communion on the tongue must understand that this practice puts the person who ministers Communion, the recipient, and the person behind them in the Communion line, and so ultimately the whole community, at risk.

Parishes are to refrain from offering Holy Communion from the Chalice. Only Priests and Deacons may receive from the Chalice.

### *Holy Communion to Care Facilities*

Those who visit or bring Holy Communion to senior care homes and health care facilities are to follow the directives of the facility.

### *Government Advisories*

Please heed advisories from Government officials. These may affect parish life and liturgical events even further.

### *Prayer of Pope Francis*

Pope Francis has composed a prayer to Mary, Health of the Sick. We are a people called to prayer. It is available on the Diocesan website. Please pray it often.

Sincerely in Christ and Mary Immaculate,

(Most Rev.) Douglas Crosby, O.M.I.,  
Bishop of Hamilton

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