

A message from Bishop Hughes:

Holy Eucharist and Health/Hygiene Guidelines

Effective Sunday, March 8, 2020

March 6, 2020

Dear Companions on the Journey,

I am very grateful for your diligence this past week as we began adjusting to concerns of potential infections. As the Centers for Disease Control, World Health Organization, and New Jersey Department of Public Health learn more about COVID-19, their prevention guidelines have changed. We can expect that as health authorities learn more their instructions will continue to change. Because of the heightened concerns about spread of infection through touch and the acknowledgement that the virus seems to particularly risky for those over 60 years of age we need to make additional changes in our worship.

Holy Eucharist and Health/Hygiene Guidelines: Effective Sunday, March 8, 2020 the following steps are required in all churches in the Diocese of Newark.

Handwashing:

- All Clergy and Eucharistic Ministers will thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water prior to each service. Hand sanitizer should be applied during the Offertory as part of the preparation for Communion.
- All people are encouraged to wash hands frequently, including before and after worship services.

The Peace and other Greetings:

- The Peace should be administered without a handshake or hug. Clergy are instructed to model this for their congregation, extending the peace through a bow, nod, wave, or other indirect contact.
- Refrain from direct physical contact when greeting the clergy and other members before or following the service.

Holy Eucharist:

- **Only use wine at Communion, grape juice is not to be used.** The healthiest choice for a common cup involves the combination of using wine in a vessel made of silver.
- **No glass or ceramic vessels are permitted for use at Communion.** If your church does not have silver altarware, please contact the Bishop's office and we will try to fill that need.
- **Intinction (dipping the bread into the wine) is no longer permitted** until further notice, whether by the communicant or by the Eucharistic Minister (or priest) on their behalf. The cup can only be administered by taking a sip, followed by the Eucharistic Minister wiping the rim of the cup thoroughly and carefully with a purificator and rotating the cup for the next communicant.
- **When coming forward for Communion, communicants have a few choices to make.** 1) They can choose to receive the bread and take sip of the wine. 2) They can receive the bread and consume it and not receive the wine. 3) Or they can come forward and be present at the rail but not receive either the bread or the wine.
- **In all cases, the priest and Eucharistic Minister are to present the bread or cup, with the words of administration to each communicant,** whether they receive by mouth or not. It may be helpful to remind parishioners that if they desire to receive, but cannot do so physically, they are nonetheless assured of the full grace of the Sacrament (BCP p. 457).

I will continue to monitor the suggestions made by health authorities and will adjust weekly as needed. For the next few weeks you can look for a message from me with updates late in the week. You remain in my prayers for a healthy and meaningful Lent.

Grace and Peace,

The Rt. Rev. Carlye J. Hughes
XI Bishop of Newark