



Spiritual Health Guidance on Ritual Modifications

(Revision 6/3/13/2020)

This document is in response for guidelines related to the Coronavirus / COVID-19 for Spiritual Health Teams within Providence St. Joseph Health. This is an initial Spiritual Health guidance for celebrations, rituals and Volunteer Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Always follow your ministry, local, regional and diocesan restrictions related to the topics outlined below. Remain vigilant to the ever-changing nature of Coronavirus/COVID-19 including warnings and restrictions implemented locally.

Guidance for Holy Communion:

1. **Wash Your Hands:** All priests, deacons and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are to wash their hands before and after the distribution of Holy Communion.
2. **Stay Home:** All congregants are advised not to attend Mass if they have any symptoms of flu, cough, fever, and to watch online or from home.
3. **Communion by cup suspended:** Distribution of the Precious Blood will be suspended.
4. **No Physical Contact Gestures:** The congregation should be advised not to shake hands or offer physical contact gestures either by handshake, hug, and sign of peace. Rather attendees are advised to warmly wave towards their neighbor.
5. **Communion by Hand:** The practice of offering Communion by hand will be expected in all hospital chapel mass celebrations and in patient rooms by Providence volunteer extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion in hospitals.
6. **Hand-washing stations** Will be present and replaced regularly
7. **Holy Water Fonts** – Will be drained completely.
8. **Departments of Spiritual Care** will remain vigilant to current system, region and ministry guidance including awareness of diocesan, local departments of health and CDC guidelines in the midst of a crisis.

Volunteer Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion in Hospitals:

1. **Harm's Way:** Providence will never seek to place volunteers in harm's way.
2. **No Quarantine Risk Areas:** Volunteers will not be asked to distribute communion in quarantine areas or where there may be presumptive positive patients.
3. **Departments of Spiritual Care must immediately maintain a clear "process of tracking"** &/or a record of patients visited by all volunteers in order to address possible exposure events.
4. **Chaplains:** Catholic staff chaplains may be asked to provide Holy Communion in areas of risk according to facility/patient restriction level.
5. **Hospital Access Restrictions:** Each ministry should determine the process for when volunteers may be limited or restricted from visiting the hospital. *(Including areas or times when external visitor restrictions are in place.)*
6. **Universal Precautions:** All hospital volunteers will observe infection protocols and follow universal precautions including the observance of no physical contact gestures, Holy Communion by hand etc.
7. **Anointing by local Parish clergy:** Local parish priests who provide Sacramental ministry will be expected to follow all visitor restrictions and observe all isolation precautions required for visitors.

Temporary Suspension of all Masses in hospital & ministry chapels: All masses in hospital & ministry chapels to be suspended in all ministries no later than 3/16/2020. Out of an abundance of caution it will be necessary to suspend public masses celebrated in hospital or ministry chapels. The Regional Chief Mission Officer or designee will ensure early communication is provided to the respective diocesan representatives. Private mass may continue to be broadcast by CCTV to patient rooms.

CPE Residents and Interns: Should follow the same protocols as other discipline specific residents in the facility *(For example: Pharmacy, Medicine and Nursing Interns/Residents).*

For additional questions contact your Regional Spiritual Health or Mission Leader or Tim Serban, PSJH System Disaster Spiritual Response Leader. Tim.Serban@Providence.org