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OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

March 31, 2020

Dear Clergy, Religious and Friends in Christ,

I am very grateful to all of the clergy, religious sisters and brothers, and deacons for the extraordinary service you are providing to our faithful during this time of pandemic. I am especially grateful for your spirit of cooperation in following the medical, civic and ecclesiastical mandates that are in place for everyone's benefit. I realize that these mandates are especially burdensome as we approach the holiest week of the year. Nonetheless, we must not waver in our vigilance to safeguard the health and well-being of all in our archdiocese and beyond.

With thanks to Father Glennon Jones and the entire Rapid Response Team (Mr. Tom Macken, Ms. Michelle Montez, Mrs. Celine Radigan, Ms. Leslie Radigan Ms. Cathy Salcido, Mr. Tony Salgado and Ms. Damaris Thillet) I am making the following adjustments to our liturgical practices at this time. Please be assured of my prayers for you and all those whom you hold dear. May the Lord of all Healing sustain us and may Mary, Health of Christians, pray for us. God bless you all.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Most Reverend John C. Wester
Archbishop of Santa Fe

For the Triduum:

- Triduum liturgies are to be conducted at the proper times.
- Livestream liturgies if possible. They can be recorded and provided after the actual liturgy, but they are NOT to be pre-recorded.
- Liturgies do not have to be celebrated in the main church if livestreaming is set up in another Mass location (rectory chapel, etc.).
- Persons allowed at the Mass:
 - Strict limit of 4 persons at Mass: celebrant, videographer, cantor, lector. A fifth person is allowed only if it is a deacon.
 - If more than one priest is present, the concelebrant(s) can replace the cantor and/or lector, musician or deacon. The bottom line is that there can be no more than four (4) persons in the church or chapel at one time – period. The ONLY exception is if there is a deacon or concelebrant, in which case there may be five (5) persons present. If there is no deacon or concelebrant, then the maximum number is four (4).
- All persons will maintain a social distance of 6 feet at ALL times—before, in preparation of in the sacristy, during and after the liturgy. It is important to be very attentive to this mandate. It is all too easy to disregard this mandate without realizing it.
- All persons will wash hands thoroughly prior to and after the liturgy, refraining from touching the face per CDC guidelines.
- Only priests will partake in the Eucharist.
- Each priest is to have his own host, paten and chalice. The concelebrating priest may approach the altar from his position that is at least 6 feet away after the celebrant steps back from the altar at least 6 feet.
- The deacon, if any, will not receive the Holy Eucharist

Adoration Chapels: closure is highly recommended but not mandated.

- If your adoration chapel remains open, adhere to the following guidelines:
 - For consistency, no more than 4 persons in the chapel at one time, and only that many if they are able to maintain the 6-foot social distance.
 - Persons queueing for adoration are to remain 6 feet apart unless they are family members living together, e.g., parents with children.
 - Some ability to wash or disinfect hands prior to and after adoration must be provided (soap & water, sanitizer, etc.)
 - Normally committed adorers are to be assured that they are not obligated.
 - Recommended: That committed adorers over 60 years old be excluded from an adorer's assignment list, because: 1) older persons often feel obligated regardless of health/age; and, 2) susceptibility to COVID fatality increases significantly at 60.
 - Proper security of the sacrament and adorers must be maintained.

Remember that the deposit of microbes on pews, rosaries, etc., is additive with the number of persons handling them, with chance of infection increasing with each person. Also, it's not only the person who risks infection, but all those with whom he/she comes in contact, and then the people with whom those come in contact, and so on.