

Influenza and the Liturgy

General Guidelines for the Diocese of Erie

We have received requests for guidance concerning the flu in regard to the liturgy.
The following practices should always be in place.

For all Persons:

- Stay home when sick.
- Wash hands frequently with soap and water when possible.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when water is not available.
- Cover noses and mouths with a tissue when coughing or sneezing (or a shirt sleeve or elbow if no tissue is available.)
- Avoid touching your face, eyes, etc. with your hands
- Avoid receiving from the cup if you do not feel well.

For all Liturgical Ministers (including Clergy):

- Wash hands prior to, and after, mass.

For all those Distributing Communion:

- After exchanging the Sign of Peace, prepare to distribute Communion.
- Extraordinary ministers should use an alcohol-based sanitizer (discreetly, please) before and after distributing Communion.
- Avoid physically touching those coming forward in the communion line, whether they are receiving in the hand, on the tongue, or asking for a blessing.
- Follow all standard procedures for ministering the cup after each communicant has received:
 - * Pinch and wipe thoroughly the rim with the purificator.
 - * Rotate the cup one quarter turn after each communicant received.
 - * Regularly re-position the purificator to a clean section as you are using it.

Additional Recommended Measures for Parishes:

- Establish regular schedules for frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces (pews, doorknobs, bathrooms, etc.)
- Provide disposable wipes so that commonly used surfaces can be wiped down frequently by ushers, etc. before Mass.
- Make hand washing facilities with soap and warm running water, sanitizers and tissues widely available.

**Should a health crisis become imminent in local areas of the diocese,
the Bishop may give further instructions, as needed.**