

MEMO

TO: All Priests
FROM: Father Peter Langevin
RE: Distribution of Holy Communion During Mass
DATE: 6 August, 2020

I hope that this finds you well. At the request of Bishop Cote, I am writing to you today concerning the *Guidelines for the Restoration of Public Worship* issued to you on 27 May, 2020. Based on feedback received from several pastors concerning both the numbers of faithful attending daily and Sunday Masses as well as the practical aspects of distributing Holy Communion and dismissing the faithful from Mass, the Bishop has decided to amend no. 42 of the *Guidelines* which directs that Holy Communion is to be distributed to the faithful after the conclusion of Mass.

Effective immediately, Holy Communion may be distributed to the faithful who wish to receive at the usual time during the Mass, i.e., immediately following the Celebrant.

Please remember that this will require that all clergy, having already received Holy Communion themselves, put on a face mask first, **then** purify their hands using either hand sanitizer or isopropyl alcohol immediately before distributing Holy Communion to the faithful. Following the distribution of Holy Communion, face masks should be removed before proceeding to the purifications, *Prayer after Communion* and concluding rites.

In announcing this change, it may be opportune to remind the faithful of the following:

1. To exercise reverential caution when lowering their face masks and receiving Holy Communion, particularly those who receive in the hand. We have received numerous complaints and reports from priests that the Eucharist is being dropped on the floor as people try to receive. It may be helpful to instruct the faithful to lower their face mask as they approach, i.e., *before* the Eucharist is placed in their hands.
2. To be mindful of others and maintain appropriate social distance when leaving the church following the conclusion of Mass. This is particularly important in places that are restricted in the doors used in exiting.

Thank you for your ongoing attention to these matters and for your hard work in providing the Mass and Sacraments to the faithful of the Diocese in these challenging times. Be assured of my continued prayers for you and the people you serve, that God will keep you safe and healthy!