



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

Office of Communications • *The Long Island Catholic* • *Fe Fuerza Vida*

50 North Park Avenue, Rockville Centre, NY 11570

Tel: 516-678-5800, ext. 221 • Fax: 516-594-0984 • www.drvc.org

STATEMENT

DATE: March 13, 2020 – 10:30 AM

RE: Mass Attendance during Virus Season

FROM: Sean P. Dolan, Director of Communications

Note: This information was sent to all priests by the Offices of the Vicar General and Chancellor. They are to be shared with the media.

During these challenging times, we encourage everyone to turn to our Lord Jesus Christ and our Blessed Mother in prayer, especially for those who are sick or vulnerable, and for those who care for them. As individuals and as a community, it is important that we act prudently, but without panic. Therefore, as a health precaution, the Catholic Diocese of Rockville Centre announces the following directives effective immediately:

1. Catholics are hereby dispensed from their obligation to attend Sunday Mass for the weekends of March 14-15, March 21-22 and March 28-29. Churches will remain open and Mass schedules will remain mostly unchanged. **However, the obligation is lifted for those three weekends. We will continue to monitor official health advisories and update these directives accordingly.**
2. We urge everyone who is sick, elderly, or vulnerable because of a medical condition, to remain at home. People in these categories are not obliged to attend Mass. Please understand that Mass schedules and availability, as well as parish and diocesan events may change, especially if our clergy is affected by illness. Please check your parish web site for local Mass schedules, updates and changes, and please consult Diocese of Rockville Centre social media (Facebook: @RVCdiocese; Twitter: @RVCdiocese) and webpage (www.drvc.org) for Diocesan updates and changes.
3. Catholics who attend Holy Mass are not required to receive Holy Communion more than once per year. No one is under any obligation to either receive or distribute Holy Communion. Catholics who choose to temporarily refrain from receiving Holy Communion may make an act of Spiritual Communion, uniting themselves worthily to our Lord's true presence in the Most Holy Eucharist through prayer.
4. Holy Mass can be viewed on the Catholic Faith Network and online. Information regarding schedules and viewing online is provided below. Note that some parishes livestream their Masses online. Check your parish website for more information.
5. The directives issued by the Diocese of Rockville Centre on March 4, 2020, regarding Masses during virus season remain in effect. They are included below for your convenience.

Directives and Guidelines for Parishes for Health Considerations during Virus Seasons

From the Office of the Chancellor/Announced – March 4, 2020 – **Remaining in Effect**



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As a health precaution, the Diocese of Rockville Centre instructs all Pastors, Clergy and Parish Churches to enact the following measures immediately:

1. Until further notice, the Precious Blood of Christ (the Chalice) is not to be distributed to anyone other than clergy (priests / deacons) or those who for health reasons must only receive the Precious Blood.
2. Until further notice, the Sign of Peace will not be given / exchanged in any form during Holy Mass. To eliminate any confusion for latecomers, visitors, children, etc., please use the following sequence after the Lord's Prayer, which omits the words **"Let us offer each other the sign of peace"**:

Priest: Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you; look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever.

People: Amen

Priest: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: And with your spirit.

Sing or say: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, etc....

3. The following practices are encouraged in all parishes:
 - a. Parishioners are instructed to remain at home if they are sick. This includes deacons, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, lectors, altar servers, ushers, music ministers, etc.. Those who are able to attend Mass should be encouraged to wash and sanitize their hands.
 - b. Priests, deacons, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion and altar servers should wash their hands immediately before serving. Disinfectant soap and/or hand sanitizer should be provided for them. Clergy and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are encouraged to wash / disinfect their hands after serving as well.
 - c. Holy water fonts at the doors of the church should be emptied and cleaned several times per week, especially before and after weekends.
 - d. Parishioners who prefer to receive Holy Communion on the tongue still have that right, though they may freely choose to receive the Sacred Host in their hands during this precautionary time. (See *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no. 92)
 - e. Cleaning and disinfecting practices normally carried out in our churches and parish facilities should be given extra and careful attention during this time.
 - f. Clergy may wish to discontinue the practice of shaking hands if greeting parishioners after Mass.



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CATHOLIC FAITH NETWORK

The Catholic Faith Network (CFN) Broadcast of the Celebration of the Eucharist:

St. Agnes Cathedral, Rockville Centre, New York

Monday – Friday at 8:30 am & 12:30 pm ET

Sunday at 11:00 am & 7:00 pm ET

St. Patrick’s Cathedral, New York

Monday – Friday at 6:30 pm ET

Our Lady of Loretto Church, Hempstead, New York

Sunday at 6 pm ET

The Catholic Faith Network (CFN) is available throughout the New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut area on Optimum channel 29/137, Verizon FiOS TV channel 296, and Spectrum channel 162/471.

The Catholic Faith Network (CFN) is also available on selected cable and satellite systems nationwide, along with a vast on-demand library of original programming and a **high quality 24/7 live stream** at CFNtv.org

You can also watch CFN on **Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, Android**, or by downloading the **CFN iOS mobile app** at the app store by searching “Catholic Faith Network” or “CFN”

