

## Update – Monday, March 16, 2020

Considering new developments and previous memos issued, the following is a summary of measures currently in effect in the Archdiocese of Vancouver as of today:

### ***New Measures***

1. In accordance with the Public Health Officer Order issued this morning, attendance at Mass or any other parish or Archdiocesan event is limited to a maximum of 50 people, effective immediately.
2. Avoid physical contact with others. A distance of two metres should be maintained at all times, including in the lineup or at the rail to receive Holy Communion. Congregants should sit in alternating rows. It may be helpful to use masking tape on pew backs to mark off two-metre spacing.
3. Please remove all hymnals, prayer cards, envelopes and other materials from the pews. Parishes are encouraged to use a projector to provide song lyrics.
4. If collection baskets with handles are not available, monitored collection baskets should be placed at the back of the church, where people can deposit their offerings.
5. Following each Mass or gathering, all pew backs, table-tops and other high-touch surfaces should be disinfected, inasmuch as possible.



### ***Previous Measures Remaining in Effect Until Further Notice***

#### ***Sunday Obligation***

1. In order to continue assisting local public health efforts to limit the spread of COVID-19, the obligation to attend Sunday Mass is lifted for everyone.
2. Those over the age of 65 are encouraged to stay home rather than attending Sunday Mass, as are those who feel even remotely unwell and those who believe they might be genuinely at risk.
3. Those who do not attend Mass are encouraged to watch Mass online or on TV, or have a time of prayer, if possible with the readings of the Sunday, and a spiritual communion.

#### ***Reception of Holy Communion***

1. As a result of direct consultation with the Public Health Officer, the faithful are strongly recommended to receive Holy Communion only in the hand.  
Those distributing Holy Communion should to avoid direct skin-to-skin contact when placing the Host into the hands of the faithful. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should not receive the Precious Blood before the general distribution of Holy Communion. Hand sanitizers should be used, or washing carefully with soap and water practiced, before and after the distribution of Holy Communion. Furthermore, no one should feel obligated to serve as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion if they would rather not at this time.
2. Respecting the right of the faithful to receive Holy Communion on the tongue, an announcement is to be made at all Masses during this period, that those who wish to receive Communion on the tongue should come forward after all other communicants have received or after Mass. Alternatively, one priest, deacon or Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion can be designated specifically to distribute Communion only on the tongue.
3. Forgo Holy Communion from the Chalice for the congregation.

#### ***Other Measures***

1. Offertory Processions are to be omitted.
2. For all Masses, celebrants/deacons should omit the Sign of Peace from the liturgical rite, as is permitted by the Roman Missal.

3. In order to reduce social isolation, parishes are strongly encouraged to find ways to mobilize people to make phone calls to those who must remain at home, and to provide services such as delivering food and necessary items. Being in regular contact with the parish community will alleviate loneliness for the homebound.
4. If possible, hand sanitizer or hand washing stations should be available to all at the entrance of the church, parish hall and other parish facilities.

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Archbishop of Vancouver