



CHANCERY OFFICE
MARCH 12, 2020

MANDATORY PROTOCOLS **AS A PRECAUTIONARY PREVENTION MEASURE**

The following **MANDATORY PROTOCOLS** are implemented with regards to the **2019 Novel Coronavirus (a.k.a.–COVID-19)** outbreak across the globe, as a precautionary measure within the Archdiocese of Agaña. Our goal is to ensure the safety of our clergy, religious, parishioners, students, employees, volunteers, and to support our public health agencies with community mitigation efforts when appropriate. Archbishop Michael Byrnes asks that, effective immediately, priests announce the following liturgical adaptations after the delivery of the homily.

- (1) **It is important to remind the faithful that the obligation to attend Sunday Mass does not apply to those who are ill. Those with flu-like symptoms must remain at home. This also applies to clergy and lay ministers. Archbishop Byrnes has granted a special dispensation from attending Mass on Sundays for persons who are ill.**
- (2) **Always observe coughing etiquettes such as covering the mouth, not with the hand(s) but with a tissue or, if a tissue is not readily available, coughing on the arm sleeve to prevent any virus from becoming airborne. Trash receptacles should be made available outside all churches. Kindly properly dispose of your tissues and other trash in these receptacles and do not leave in the pews.**
- (3) **Check and fill hand-soap dispensers in all restrooms of the church and provide disposable tissues. Dispensers of alcohol-based hand sanitizers are available at church entrances. Please utilize them.**
- (4) **Sanitize places and things in the church that are touched frequently.**
- (5) **At this time all holy water fonts and baptismal fonts are to be emptied. If the liturgy requires the use of holy water, it should be disposed of appropriately afterwards. Priests are to wash their hands before and after using the sacred oils. Should the faithful wish to have personal holy water, you may request it from your pastor.**
- (6) **Removal of missalettes and songbooks during this time.**
- (7) **The Archbishop has suspended pastoral care visits to the sick or the homebound by priests and lay ministers, unless for the Anointing of the Sick, until further notice. For further pastoral considerations please see your pastor. We will offer a Spiritual Communion Prayer during the liturgy for the intentions of everyone within the Universal Prayer. In addition, there are other ways for homebound parishioners to enter into the spirit of observing the Lord's Day, such as meditating on the readings for that Sunday, praying the rosary, and (for those who have the availability) praying the Liturgy of the Hours.**



Archdiocese of Agaña

- (8) Please, no holding of hands during the Our Father.**
- (9) At this time the Exchange of the Sign of Peace will be omitted.**
- (10) At this time Holy Communion is to be distributed to the faithful under the species of the Consecrated Bread only. Reception of the Precious Blood will be suspended for the faithful.**
- (11) Veneration of Relics is to be done by a General Blessing by the priest or deacon.**
- (12) Temporarily the cultural practice of kissing or “*manginge*” of the elder (or priest) hand is suspended at this time.**

It is our prayer that these Protocols will be beneficial for the health and safety of the faithful as we continue celebrating the source and summit of our Christian lives, even in the midst of the threat of this virus. We will continue to monitor the situation closely. Directives will be forthcoming for adaptations that can be made to the celebration of the Triduum, given the virus. We also continue to evaluate upcoming liturgical celebrations and events and will consult with the appropriate government officials regarding any issues with large gatherings. Should the status given by the health agencies change to an Alert or a call to cease contact, we will inform the clergy of any necessary additional action.

During this time of global health crisis, the People remain steadfast in prayer and through the intercession of our Santa Marian Kalamen, May we come to know and believe in the Good Shepherd who always leads us out of darkness and into his marvelous light.

The Archdiocese will add a special section on its website - www.archagana.org, dedicated to health precautions and the Novel Coronavirus (likely available on March 15). It will include a downloadable page with key information for viewing, printing, posting, sharing. For additional information please refer to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at www.cdc.gov, and DPHSS website at <http://dphss.guam.gov/2019-novel-coronavirus-2019-n-cov/>.

The Most Reverend
Michael J. Byrnes, S.T.D.
Metropolitan Archbishop of Agaña