



Office of the Bishop

Roman Catholic Diocese of Lubbock

My Dear People of the Diocese of Lubbock:

If you keep up with news reports (as I do), you are well aware that the threat to the general public regarding the spread of the Covid-19 Virus (Coronavirus) has increased significantly in the last week.

In light of that fact, I am implementing the second phase of our precautions as a diocesan faith community. I am doing so out of a concern for the general public as a responsible citizen and Pastor of souls.

Therefore, I ask that the following measures be implemented immediately in all Catholic entities (churches, schools, and other facilities) operating in the Diocese of Lubbock:

- Distribution of Holy Communion to the Faithful will now take place only under the species of the consecrated host. I remind the Faithful that it is the Church's teaching that the whole Christ – body, blood, soul, and divinity -- is contained under the form of either the consecrated bread or the consecrated wine. Those with Celiac Disease should consult their Pastor to make suitable arrangements to receive Holy Communion. **THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION FROM THE CHALICE IS HEREBY SUSPENDED.**
- The Sign of Peace is not to be exchanged in any manner during Masses in the Diocese of Lubbock for the present time. **THE SIGN OF PEACE WILL NOT TAKE PLACE DURING MASS.**
- I beg the indulgence of our Catholic Faithful for the sake of Ministers of Holy Communion and all those receiving Holy Communion, due to the danger of contagion from contact with the tongue and/or saliva, to seriously consider the option, as an act of charity, to receive Holy Communion in the Hand during these critical days. **ENCOURAGEMENT TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION IN THE HAND.**
- I am asking that Holy Water be removed from all holy water fonts throughout the Diocese of Lubbock, unless the font has a filtered recirculating system. **SUSPEND USE OF HOLY WATER FONTS UNLESS THEY ARE RECIRCULATING AND FILTERED.**

Most Reverend Robert M. Coerver, Bishop of Lubbock

PO Box 98700
Lubbock, TX 79499-98700

(806) 792-3943
rcoerver@catholiclubbock.org

Judy Leos Rodriguez, Executive Assistant
jlrodriguez@catholiclubbock.org

I am mandating that these precautions be taken at this time because the World Health Organization has now declared the Covid-19 outbreak to be a pandemic, because of more serious measures that are being taken in other parts of the country to combat the spread of the virus, and because the threat of the spread of the virus within Texas and our population becomes of much more serious concern by the hour.

If we are not successful in controlling the pandemic nearby, we could face the possibility of suspending public celebrations of the liturgy, including Mass, and/or suspension of other parish gatherings such as faith formation, fellowship opportunities, meetings of parish committees, and organizations, etc.

It is my hope that these admittedly extreme measures can be lifted by the time we arrive at Holy Week.

At this time, I am not setting a definitive end date to the measures. I will communicate with you when we can return to our customary manner of gathering and celebrating Eucharist together. Let us pray that Easter will bring an experience of resurrection and removal of the threat of the Covid-19 virus in our area, in our country, and around the world.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Robert M. Coerver". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Robert M. Coerver
Bishop of Lubbock