



DECREE ESTABLISHING LITURGICAL NORMS
DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic present in the Diocese of Manchester, on March 17, 2020, I issued a notice suspending the public celebration of Mass in the Diocese. As of May 18, 2020, over 3,600 New Hampshire citizens have tested positive for COVID-19, and 172 of our neighbors have lost their lives in the very short time since we first learned of this virus.

Mindful that the dignity of the human person requires the pursuit of the common good (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* §1926) and as Bishop of the Diocese of Manchester, understanding my responsibility to issue liturgical norms by which all are bound (canon 838 § 4), I hereby decree the following:

The public celebration of Mass remains suspended.

No later than Pentecost (Sunday, May 31, 2020), each pastor shall make arrangements for the distribution of Holy Communion outside of Mass in accordance with the current directives issued by me to preserve the sacredness and reverence of receipt of the Sacrament while promoting the health and safety of the Faithful.

Holy Communion may be distributed by a priest, deacon, or an extraordinary minister so long as the person distributing Holy Communion has not been affected by nor is symptomatic of COVID-19. Receipt of Holy Communion may be standing or kneeling, on the tongue or in the hand, at the choice of the individual person (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal* § 160). Because the distribution of Holy Communion takes place outside of Mass and it is forbidden to reserve the Precious Blood at any time, the Precious Blood is not to be distributed.

These shall be the liturgical norms to which all clergy and Faithful shall be bound until such time as I deem it to be prudent to modify them.

Given at the Chancery on this 19th day of May, 2020.

Most Reverend Peter A. Libasci, D.D.
Bishop of Manchester

Meredith P. Cook
Chancellor