



The Byzantine Catholic
Metropolitan Archeparchy of Pittsburgh

Office of the Archbishop

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Christ is Risen!

May 1, 2020

We continue to pray during this Easter Season for the end of the current pandemic. Some areas with several deaths remain under stay at home orders. Other states or counties are or soon will be able to gather for Divine Liturgies and programs as long as social distancing guidelines are maintained.

The future of the rate and future number of infections is unknown. We pray that the number of cases is reduced in areas which have peaked and does not rise in areas which have been low.

Byzantine Catholics of the Archeparchy continue to be relieved of the obligations to attend Sunday and Holy Day Divine Liturgy. Even in areas where it is permitted, those who are ill, those vulnerable to infection, or who have a serious fear of catching the virus are encouraged to not attend services.

For these areas which are in areas of high levels of infections or local restrictions, the Faithful are encouraged to attend Divine Liturgy and services online.

For the areas which have reduced infection and are permitted by state and local authorities to gather with social distancing protocols, the parishes may gather. The decision of when the Divine Liturgy is to be celebrated will be determined by the local pastor.

Attached are the 42 page general guidelines with additional WHO and CDC guidelines of how to apply the social distancing principles from the Holy See to the celebration of the Latin Rite Mass, Holy Anointing of the Sick, and confessions.

There have several questions concerning the distribution of body and blood of Christ. The traditional way of distributing from the chalice on the spoon is the safest way. The wine helps sterilize the spoon and Eucharist. There is no evidence of past evidence of virus or bacterial transfer through the spoon. During the time of virus, please follow these guide lines for the time of the pandemic.

First, if you or the communicant is known to be ill, do not distribute or receive communion.

Second, announce to people to tilt their heads, open your mouths, and do not close your mouth.

Third, make sure the spoon and Eucharist is completely immersed in the wine.

Fourth, keep the six foot distance between people in line to communion and to wait in pew until there is room in the line to receive communion.

Fifth, the Priest or Deacon should wear a face covering during the distribution of communion.

Please continue to send your questions to me at wskurla@archpitt.org or my cell at 412-228-9271.

We will answer your questions and send further directives as necessary.

+ William C Skurla

Most Reverend William C Skurla
Metropolitan Archbishop of Pittsburgh