

Dear Friends,

This year's flu season has been particularly difficult in Connecticut. As a community of faith that cares for one another, we owe it to ourselves to be informed about preventing the flu and taking care of ourselves if we get sick. After speaking with town officials and physicians, I thought it important to take a few steps to do our best to help prevent the spread of sickness, especially when we come together to worship.

I have posted on our parish website some very helpful information from the Centers for Disease Control about preventive measures and what to do if you have flu-like symptoms. In addition, I am making some suggestions and taking some actions that are described below. All of this is in an effort to keep everyone healthy so that we may come together without interruption to pray and give thanks to God.

1. Effective immediately and until the end of flu season, we will not offer the Precious Blood of Christ at Mass. The number of Eucharistic Ministers and clergy distributing Communion at Mass will remain the same; all will offer the Body of Christ. If anyone cannot receive the Host because of an allergy, we will have gluten-free hosts available. If you wish to receive a gluten-free host, kindly inform any priest or deacon prior to Mass and we will accommodate you. If there are other concerns regarding the reception of Holy Communion during this brief time, please contact me directly and we will accommodate you.
2. Please use your best judgment when shaking hands. During the exchange of the greeting of peace in the Mass, a head nod, wave and/or spoken greeting of peace is quite acceptable.
3. If you are feeling sick, please do not come to church. It is better that you stay at home and take care of yourself so that you can feel well and get back to church soon! If you come to church with symptoms, you run the risk of getting others sick.
4. If you are sick or if you know of others who are sick and need help (meal preparation, transportation, a run to the pharmacy, etc.), please call the parish office and we will do our best to lend a hand.

If we follow the steps suggested by health experts and keep one another in prayer, we will weather the challenges of the season well. Let's also keep those who are sick in prayer, that they will recover and join us again soon at Mass.

Grateful for your cooperation and looking forward to springtime, I am

Yours in Christ,

Father Rob