



ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS  
Office of Communications and Planning

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Archbishop Robert J. Carlson Mandates Precautionary Measures Regarding Holy Mass Amid Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic and Presence in Greater St. Louis**

With the declaration of the coronavirus (COVID-19) as a pandemic and the virus' presence in the Greater St. Louis area, following consultation with the St. Louis Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Archbishop Robert J. Carlson is now **mandating** that all parishes within the Archdiocese of St. Louis adhere to the health and safety measures recommended in the [letter he distributed last week](#).

The mandates include advising parishioners who are sick or have a compromised immune system to refrain from attending Mass, school or church activities; suspending the physical exchange of the sign of peace; and suspending the distribution of Holy Communion via the chalice. New measures added since Archbishop Carlson's previous letter include the emptying and discontinuation of the use of Holy Water fonts; additional alterations to the distribution of Holy Communion; and the requirement that all those administering Holy Communion be in good health, free from symptoms of illness.

Priests and deacons who are sick or experiencing symptoms are not to offer Mass, participate in parish activities or visit the sick in residences, hospitals or nursing homes. Those who are symptomatic of COVID-19 are being directed to contact their local department of health and follow the guidelines.

All decisions regarding parish, school and archdiocesan workplace operations will continue to be determined by developments in the COVID-19 situation in the St. Louis area, as well as by the effects on each individual community. We continue to be in contact with health officials for guidance in all decisions, and reiterate to our parishes, schools and staff the importance of reviewing the CDC website regularly, staying home if one is sick, following hygiene and travel guidelines from health officials, and reporting any pertinent information to the local health department.

All updates and resources from the Archdiocese of St. Louis regarding COVID-19, including stories from the *St. Louis Review*, can be found at [archstl.org/coronavirus](http://archstl.org/coronavirus). Please direct questions to [communications@archstl.org](mailto:communications@archstl.org).

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