



St. Matthew Catholic Church and School

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Dear Brothers and Sisters of St. Matthew Parish,

With an increasing focus on the coronavirus around the world, we wanted to assure you that our pastoral team continues to monitor the situation. Without causing alarm, we believe it is prudent to remind you of our customary health precautions whenever there is an outbreak.

Our response to this spreading virus must reflect how we, as disciples of Jesus, love our neighbor and love God. In caring for all members of our community — especially the elderly and the vulnerable — we are carrying out the mission of the church. We must do our part to help prevent the spread of the virus.

We strongly urge you to read and follow these recommendations out of an abundance of caution:

- If you are sick or feel you are getting sick, stay at home and do **NOT** attend Mass. Missing Mass due to illness is not sinful; it is prudent and shows care for your brothers and sisters.
- Refrain from holding hands during the Lord's Prayer, rather elevate your hands, palm upward, during the prayer.
- During Mass, at the Sign of Peace, simply say, "Peace be with you," instead of offering your hand. Many Asian cultures will simply bow slightly to each other, and this might be a custom to emulate.
- During Communion, the Eucharist will only be offered in your hand, rather than on your tongue. Please extend your cupped hands as though you are providing a throne for Jesus and the EM will place the host in your palm. We will not be offering the Precious Blood from a common cup at this time. Remember if you receive under one species, you are receiving both the Body and the Blood. When Fr. Nguyen drinks the Precious Blood, he is doing so on behalf of the entire community.
- You will notice that we have drained the holy water in the church, until further notice. Please simply bless yourself with the sign of the cross as you enter and exit the church.
- Please practice respiratory etiquette and good health hygiene with these recommendations from the CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention-treatment.html>

Thank you for your attention to these important health precautions. These changes are temporary and should not disrupt the celebration of the Mass. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Fr. Khanh D. Nguyen
Pastor

Prevention & Treatment Information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
 - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
 - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
 - For information about handwashing, see CDC's Handwashing website

These are everyday habits that can help prevent the spread of several viruses.

For more information, please check either the Centers for Disease Control website:

<https://www.cdc.gov> or the Seattle/King County Public Health website:

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/communicable-diseases/disease-control/novel-coronavirus>