



Office of the Archbishop

Archdiocese of Mobile

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To: All Priests

Dear Brothers,

We are blessed that public Masses have resumed in our archdiocese. At the same time, we need to be vigilant about maintaining safety in the celebration of Mass. The potential for the spread of the virus among parishioners and among the priests of our archdiocese is real. It has happened elsewhere and we do not want this to occur in the Archdiocese of Mobile.

Complaints have been received in my office that priests are not maintaining social distancing when distributing Communion and not sanitizing their hands after touching someone else.

Brothers, we are dealing with people's safety and lives. There can be no exceptions to our regulations for the celebration of public Masses. Social distancing must be maintained during the Mass and the only way to maintain social distancing when distributing Communion is by the communicant receiving on the hand. Please explain to your parishioners that for the time being no one is to receive Communion on the tongue. Make certain that if your hand comes in contact with someone else at Mass, however slight, you sanitize your hands before continuing.

We live in the knowledge that our actions must be answerable to God. Standing before God now, our personal preferences and even our personal rights must temporarily yield to the Common Good. It is not that we are forfeiting our rights but that we understand that love of God and neighbor are to guide our actions. Our regulations show love of neighbor by seeking to protect all at Mass.

If any priest cannot follow archdiocesan regulations, it will be necessary for him to refrain from the celebration of public Masses. This matter is too serious for us to take any other approach than one of extreme caution for the safety of others.

Let us keep each other in prayer.

Sincerely in the lord,

Most Reverend Thomas J. Rodi
Archbishop of Mobile