



DIOCESE OF CHEYENNE

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From: Bishop Steven Biegler
Date: March 13, 2020
Re: Obligation to attend Sunday Mass

As the Coronavirus continues to spread throughout the United States, the Diocese of Cheyenne is committed to taking all reasonable precautions to prevent transmission of the virus. In addition to the directives issued on March 3, 2020 (summarized below), from March 13 to April 8, 2020, **a dispensation from the obligation to attend Holy Mass (canon 1245) is granted to:**

- those of any age who are ill, and
- those with an underlying health condition, such as chronic lung disease, COPD, asthma, etc.
- Moreover, any person over 60 years old may choose to use this dispensation.

Stay home if you are sick or in a high-risk category, since this virus is primarily transmitted through contact with respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Sunday Mass is broadcast on K2 (ABC) at 9 AM.

CORONAVIRUS PRECAUTIONS

- Mandatory handwashing for all ministers and thorough washing of all liturgical vessels.
- Permission to suspend Holy Communion from the Chalice accompanied by encouragement to receive Holy Communion in the hand and not on the tongue.
- Permission to suspend physical contact during the Sign of Peace.
- Permission to empty Holy Water fonts.

Please note: these precautions are of limited effectiveness. They are no substitute for staying home when you are ill. We will continue to monitor the progression of this disease and make appropriate recommendations.

Clergy and lay leaders are to make prudent decisions so that non-essential gatherings are avoided. In addition to the effect on physical health, I am concerned about the social and economic impacts of this outbreak. Isolation and loneliness are already experienced by so many people. I encourage clergy to discuss with Finance and Pastoral Councils how the parish might offer outreach to those who are affected by social isolation or how they could collaborate with the local community to provide support to those needing financial aid because of health care costs or lack of employment.

Please offer the following or a similar intention at Masses:

For all people affected by COVID-19 or any serious illness, the elderly and homebound, as well as all medical personnel and caregivers for the sick.