

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

My last three letters have centered on the fifth anniversary of our parish which we celebrated last weekend - and I have more to write on that topic - but two other concerns will take up most of the space here this weekend. As you will know from being at Mass this weekend, the archdiocese has issued some temporary norms for the liturgy for the purpose of health precautions. Here's the memo we received this past week:

The Office of Worship, in consultation with local health authorities and the Archdiocesan Office of Risk Management, continues to encourage the clergy and faithful to observe necessary standard precautions to protect the health of others during this flu season, and especially with the risks related to H1N1 influenza. The best way to prevent the spread of contagious disease is to practice good hygiene. In addition to practicing good hygiene, the Cardinal directs the following for the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy and for flu prevention:

- The Holy Water fonts are to be drained, cleaned with a disinfecting soap, and re-filled with holy water on a regular basis. Please note that old holy water should be disposed of in the sacarium.
- The distribution of the Precious Blood for the faithful is suspended, with the exception of those who must receive from the cup due to medical reasons. The faith of the Church teaches that Christ, whole and entire, is received even under only one species.
- The exchange of the Sign of Peace is to be offered without any physical contact. If the priest celebrant chooses to extend the invitation for the sign of peace, the faithful, instead of a handshake, may bow to the persons nearby.
- While the faithful retain the option of receiving Holy Communion on the tongue or in the hand, all ministers of Holy Communion are advised to distribute the consecrated hosts with care, being cautious not to touch the tongue or the hand of the communicant.
- Parishioners should be reminded that if they are ill or suspect they are ill with a contagious illness, they are not bound by the Sunday Mass obligation. They should remain at home and return to church when they are well.

These directives are effective Saturday, October 31, 2009 and remain in effect until the cold and flu season has come to an end. We thank you for your understanding and support of these directives, which aim to protect the health of our people.

Around the world Catholic dioceses are taking different steps in this regard and at different times. In some dioceses, the option for reception of Communion on the tongue has been temporarily suspended since this method of distributing and receiving the Eucharist puts communicant and minister of the sacrament in the most direct contact. This option has not been suspended in the Archdiocese of Boston.

I look forward to the time when Communion from the cup is restored and the option for a handshake or hug restored for the sign of peace.

And in regard to other health concerns... This past week we received the report from a study we requested for investigating health concerns in the basement of the church building. The report indicates some mold and asbestos which will require attention. While we have not been advised to close the basement immediately and while we have not yet contracted or set a date for the removal of these materials, we know that this must be done and must be done sooner than later. In light of that and after consultation with the Parish Pastoral Council, the Parish Staff and the Parish Buildings and Grounds Commission, the parish basement will be closed to parishioner access and use until the necessary work has been completed.

In particular this means that for the time being:

- our children's dismissal for the Word liturgy at the Sunday 9:30 Mass will not take place
- the choirs will rehearse in the upstairs church
- no faith formation programs will take place in the lower church
- daily Mass will be celebrated in the upstairs church
- the rest rooms in the church basement will not be open for use

As we receive more information on these concerns we will report to you here in the parish bulletin.

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NOVEMBER: The Month of All Souls

**MASS ON ALL SOULS DAY, NOVEMBER 2
7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.**

*An ancient custom names November as the Month of All Souls
- a special season for praying for those who have died.
November is so dedicated because it begins with the feasts of All Saints and All Souls.
As we did last year, we have chosen a particular weekend in the month of November
for especially remembering and praying for
all who have been buried from Holy Family Parish this past year
and for all our deceased relatives and friends:
we will have this special remembrance at all the Masses on the weekend of November 14/15.*

*As we have done for a number of years, there will be a book available at each entrance to the church
in which you are invited to write the names of deceased relatives and friends
for whom you would ask the parish to pray.*

*You are also invited to bring to church photographs of loved ones for whom you might ask others to pray.
These photographs can be placed on one of two large bulletin boards
that will be placed in the Gathering Room in church.
If you like you may also post the names of those in the photographs.
At the end of the month it will be your responsibility to remove the photographs you placed there.
(Writing **your** name and phone on the back of the photographs will insure their safe return
if you forget to remove them.)*

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Sincerely,
Fr. Fleming

P.S. I have an "auto-correct" feature on the program on which I type these letters. Last week, without my noticing, my auto-correct changed my use of the word "pastoring" (which it did not recognize) to "pasturing." While a pastor is a shepherd, your pastor does not think of his people as farm animals to be cared for in the back 40!