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## **MEMORANDUM**

**10 March 2020**

In light of increasing concerns with the spread of the Corona virus (COVID-19) and after consultation with healthcare professionals from Lehigh Valley Health Network and Saint Luke's University Health Network, Bishop Schlert has directed additional liturgical changes for the celebration of Mass within the geographical territory of the Diocese of Allentown. As you will note, these modifications are effective immediately.

- The Deacon will receive only the sacred host.
- Regular refreshing of Holy Water fonts OR removal of the Holy Water altogether.
- Clergy are strongly discouraged from shaking hands after Mass.
- For clergy and EOMs: Regular washing of hands with soap and water or use of hand sanitizer before and after the distribution of Holy Communion.
- Communion should not be distributed under the form of wine.
- Communion on the tongue is strongly discouraged.
- Instead of shaking hands, bow to each other at the Sign of Peace.

These simple changes are not mandated to create additional panic among the faithful, but are liturgical options made out of an abundance of caution for the health and well-being of our Diocese.

As this is a rapidly changing situation, the Diocese is closely monitoring this matter in consultation with our healthcare experts. The Diocese is prepared to take additional steps if necessary to protect the health and safety of clergy, parishioners, employees and students.

Thank you for your kind assistance in this matter.