



Anglican Catholic Church



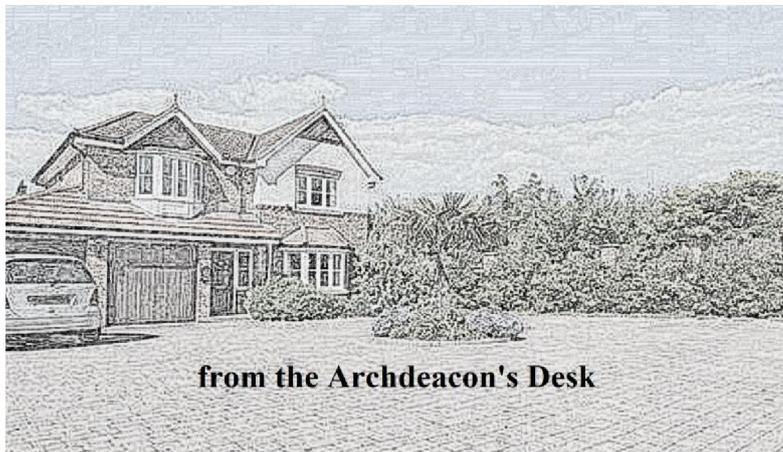
Diocese of the United Kingdom

Catholic Faith † Orthodox Worship † Apostolic Order

March 2020

My dear friends and colleagues,

The current worries around the spread of Covid 19 mean that we should address certain practices at church, and particularly at Mass. The Bishop has requested that I send the following guidance.



from the Archdeacon's Desk

Some practices have developed which ought not to have done, but in particular the handling of the chalice by individual communicants is of concern. Sometimes the priest may not have a particularly steady hand and may, in normal circumstances, appreciate the guidance of the chalice by the communicant by the holding of its base. Remember, the bowl of the chalice should never be held by the recipient in any circumstances anyway. The Bishop advises that for the time being the chalice ought not to be touched at all by anyone other than the priest or deacon who is administering. Occasionally we are presented with the issue of Intinction - usually this is from visitors. This should cease immediately. It is another way that the virus can be passed on. People can be reminded that Communion in one kind is perfectly acceptable and that each of the sacred elements contains the fullness of Christ's Body and Blood. Clergy might well use this as an opportunity to remind the faithful how they should receive Communion. If the Host is placed into the hand or, preferably, onto the tongue care should be exercised that the cleric's fingers do not touch the skin, lips or tongue of the communicant.

The Bishop has dispensed with the kissing of the Episcopal ring until the emergency is ended. A slight bow of the head is acceptable for those who wish.

The following page is taken from the Church of England's website, and some of the practices, such as the shaking of hands at the "Peace", do not apply to our particular worship, but nevertheless the good advice and guidance contained is helpful.

We must all pray for a swift end to the spread of this disease and trust in God's providence. We also remember in our prayers those who have been bereaved following the death of someone who has caught the virus, and those who are already infected or vulnerable to contracting it.

With every blessing

Fr. Raymond Thompson

Archdeacon

Guidance for churches

Current Government advice is that individuals should follow good hygiene practices including: carrying tissues and using them to catch coughs and sneezes, and binning the tissue; washing hands with soap and water (for 20 seconds) or using sanitiser gel to kill germs.

It is sadly advisable to empty Holy Stoup bowls.

Anyone who has returned to the UK from any of these areas in the last 14 days and develops symptoms of cough or fever or shortness of breath, should immediately stay indoors and avoid contact with other people as you would with the flu, and call NHS 111 to inform them of your recent travel to the country:

Hubei province in China in the last 14 days, even if you do not have symptoms

Iran, lockdown areas in northern Italy or special care zones in South Korea since 19 February, even if you do not have symptoms

other parts of mainland China or South Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan or Thailand in the last 14 days and have a cough, high temperature or shortness of breath (even if your symptoms are mild)

other parts of northern Italy (anywhere north of Pisa, Florence and Rimini), Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar or Vietnam since 19 February and have a cough, high temperature or shortness of breath (even if your symptoms are mild).

Long-standing government advice has been that 'In a pandemic, it makes good sense to take precautions to limit the spread of disease by not sharing common vessels for food and drink.' COVID-19 has NOT been declared a pandemic.

Churches should already be following best-hygiene practices that include advising parishioners with coughs and sneezes to refrain from handshaking during The Peace and to receive Communion in one kind only.

At present, there is no Government advice that suggests the use of the Common Cup should be suspended.

It is also best practice for churches to have hand-sanitisers available for parishioners to use.

In addition, priests presiding at the Eucharist, communion administrators and servers should wash their hands, preferably with an alcohol-based (minimum 60%) hand-sanitiser.

Intinction is not recommended (even by celebrants or communion-administrators) as this represents an infection transmission route as well as a risk to those with certain allergies.

Best hygiene practice should continue to be observed in all pastoral contacts.

Current advice from Public Health England

Whilst in places of worship, there is no need to avoid other worshippers who are well or to change normal faith practices – this includes taking wine from the communal chalice. Public Health England recommends that you should take usual infection prevention precautions including:

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available. This is particularly important after taking public transport.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

If you feel unwell, stay at home, do not attend work or school.

Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in a bin. Download a poster from NHS England with guidance.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces in the home and work environment.

