**Diocese Updates its Response to Coronavirus**

The Diocese of St. Augustine continues to closely monitor the developments related to COVID-19.

As of today (March 12), there are no parish or Catholic school closures. Visit the diocesan web calendar at [dosafl.com](https://dosafl.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5cbbc6030d8ad8295bee54a60&id=5a7d41e7ac&e=985311d843) for cancellations of programs or events due to the coronavirus. The diocese will update its response as needed.

Upon listening to requests from pastors and Catholic healthcare leaders, Bishop Felipe Estévez has provided a unified policy for the 17-county region of the diocese. The following measures will occur in all parishes of the diocese, effective
March 14-15:

1. Holy Communion via the chalice is suspended, knowing that one receives the fullness of the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ in the consecrated host.
2. Holy Communion will be distributed on the hand only. Receiving Holy Communion on the tongue or by intinction is not permitted.
3. The physical sign of peace has been suspended.
4. The non-liturgical  practice of holding hands during the Our Father ends.
5. Holy Water fonts are to remain empty until further notice.
6. All liturgical ministers must practice good hygiene, washing their hands with soap and water for at least 20-30 seconds before and after all Masses.
7. Parishioners who are sick are strongly encouraged to stay home. Missing Mass is not a sin if you are sick.

Let us pray for those suffering from this infectious virus and for the blessed repose of all who have died from this illness. Let us also pray for scientists and public health officials, that they may soon find a remedy for this global infection.

For more information on COVID-19, visit the [Centers for Disease Control (CDC)](https://dosafl.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5cbbc6030d8ad8295bee54a60&id=e11947a780&e=985311d843) and the [Florida Department of Health](https://dosafl.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5cbbc6030d8ad8295bee54a60&id=b49c66c345&e=985311d843).