



The Coronavirus and Communion?

News of a virulent new virus spreading from China and more locally hard-hitting flus, coughs and colds may raise questions about receiving Communion and other features of church hygiene. Some thoughts:

- **Remember what your mom told you.** Cover your mouth. Wash your hands. Be thoughtful (cautious) about contact with others, with regard to their maladies or yours.
- **You'll see more hand sanitizer around the church. Use it** – especially if you are clergy, a lay minister serving at the altar, usher or coffee hour host. You may see me using it before Communion. Tacky? Maybe. But also respectful of your health.
- **We use fortified wine for Communion – 18% alcohol.** It's widely thought to prevent the spread of germs, viruses, etc. We who consume what remains in the chalice after all have communed rely on this conclusion.
- **Taking by 'intinction' – dipping the host in the cup – is discouraged.** If you believe your health is best served by intinction, allow the clergy or Communion minister to dip the Host in the cup and place it on your tongue. (Communicants who self-dip get their fingers in the wine with troubling frequency.) If you wish to receive the Host directly in your mouth or receive the Sacrament in both species by intinction, please extend your tongue at least slightly past your lower lip so that the Host may be placed on it with no other contact.
- **If Bishop Lee gives instruction,** as bishop's may do in response to emerging health concerns, I will transmit it, so to speak, in the newsletter and Sunday bulletins.

- Fr. Raymond +