

<p><b>Federal Response Stage 0 (WHO Phases 1 &amp; 2)</b>  No new influenza viruses in humans, but influenza outbreak involving domestic animals in an at-risk country.</p> <p>Reinforce proper hygiene for those ministering communion.</p> <p>Remind congregations that those who are ill should stay home, or at least refrain from the Cup.  Planning begins.</p>
<p><b>Federal Response Stages 0 &amp; 1 (WHO Phase 3)</b>  Human outbreak overseas: caught from animals (stage 0) or, rarely, from human-to-human contact (stage 1).</p> <p>Education of clergy and faithful re: issues surrounding pandemic influenza.</p> <p>Planning at diocesan, school, and parish levels. Develop and distribute resources. Begin or update stockpiles of needed resources.</p>
<p><b>Federal Response Stage 2 (WHO Phases 4 &amp; 5)</b>  Human outbreak overseas, with limited (phase 4) or increasing (phase 5) human-to-human transmission.</p> <p>Ensure all resources and protocols are in place for pandemic.</p> <p>Complete any tasks from Stages 0-1 that remain undone.</p>
<p><b>Federal Response Stage 3 (WHO Phase 6) / PSI = 4/5</b>  Pandemic Phase: Widespread human outbreaks overseas</p> <p>Complete any tasks from stage 0-2 that remain undone.</p> <p>Remind parish as to what steps will be taken in the event of pandemic flu in Stages 4 and 5.</p> <p>All sick individuals, including clergy, are to stay home. Signs are posted on church doors instructing those with fever or other flu-like symptoms not to enter.</p>
<p><b>Federal Response Stage 4 (WHO Phase 6) / PSI = 4/5</b>  Pandemic Phase: First human case in North America</p> <p>Church Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-turn off water fountains or mark them as not to be used</li> <li>-empty holy water fonts (have bottles available for home use)</li> <li>-have hand sanitizer, tissue and trash receptacles available</li> <li>-housekeeping staff to clean door handles and other surfaces with disinfectants after each Mass (at least daily); use gloves, masks, and goggles when emptying trash receptacles and cleaning</li> <li>-signs at doors informing those ill not to enter (as in Stage 3)</li> <li>-distribute home Liturgies of the Word and other resources in anticipation of suspension of large group gatherings</li> </ul> <p>Mass: Communion Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-gloves and masks for counting Hosts / cover vessels</li> <li>-no communion from Cup; strict washing of Mass vessels</li> <li>-strict hand washing of communion ministers before &amp; after distribution;</li> <li>-in distributing communion, place Host on hand w/o touching; no blessing of non-communicants with touch</li> <li>-Communion on the tongue strongly discouraged</li> <li>-if accidentally touch recipient, must stop distributing and sanitize hands before resuming</li> </ul>

Mass: Other Practices

- stop use of small “daily Mass” chapels
- cancel Children’s Liturgy of Word
- no collection baskets passed; money “quarantined” for 3 days
- disposable worship aids used instead of books
- no sign of peace (bow instead) or holding hands for Our Father, etc.
- consider limiting gathering size
- seating every-other pew
- cancel after-Mass social / refreshments

Reconciliation

Suspend use of confessionals; disinfection of room used for confession  
Maintain 3’ distance between penitent and confessor; consider mask

Baptisms & Weddings

Only immediate family and witnesses/godparents. No large group baptisms. No receptions at parish.

Funerals

Prepare for increased need for funeral services.  
May need to change approach to funerals (e.g. Funeral Outside Mass or Rite of Committal only)  
Only immediate family may attend; plan for memorial Masses after pandemic resolves.

Pastoral Care to the Sick

Pastoral care: masks/gloves. Phone/e-mail contact with quarantined

**Federal Response Stage 5 (WHO Phase 6) / PSI = 4/5**  
Pandemic Phase: Spread throughout U.S. / Iowa

Continue as above. In addition:

Mass

If not already done, distribute resources for home prayer.

No Communion on the tongue

If Public Health authorities mandate that all large-group gatherings be suspended, parishes will comply and stop offering the Mass and other sacraments to groups. Sunday obligation therefore lifted.

The Bishop, or, in his absence, the Vicar General, may also order the suspension of Masses and public celebration of the sacraments and other liturgical rites. Sunday obligation therefore lifted.

If public celebration of the sacraments is suspended, signs to that effect will be posted at entrances to the church and parish offices.

Reconciliation

Permission for Form III (General Absolution) given  
Instruct faithful re: making a perfect act of contrition

Baptisms

Instruct faithful regarding the extraordinary form of baptism.  
Permission for baptism in the home granted.

Weddings

Remind the clergy regarding the extraordinary form of marriage, and of civil requirements for marriage

Funerals

Depending on Public Health directives, it may not be possible to gather for the Funeral Liturgy, or at the graveside for the Rite of Committal. The body may not be available either liturgy, even if it can be celebrated.

Ministers are to familiarize themselves with the options available in the *Order or Christian Funerals* and diocesan funeral booklet.

A record of those who die during the pandemic is to be kept, and memorial Masses offered once the pandemic has resolved.

Pastoral Care to the Sick

Activate deanery and parish-wide plans to provide pastoral care to the sick, dead/bereaved, and quarantined. Move priests as planned.

Be aware that the need/request for funeral services and counseling will dramatically increase, and that at the same time clergy and other ministers may be among those quarantined or those who succumb to the pandemic.

Pay attention to “decontamination” before returning to place of residence.

**Federal Response Stage 6 (WHO Return to Phase 1)**

Recovery and preparation for subsequent waves.

Heed local public health and diocesan directives as to when to return to pre-pandemic practices in a graded fashion.

Provide for post-trauma pastoral care and counseling needs.

Provide for funeral rites / memorial liturgies for victims of the pandemic.

Critique responses to past wave of the pandemic and prepare for the next.