



DECREE SUSPENDING THE SIGN OF PEACE
AND THE RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION FROM THE CHALICE
TO REDUCE RISKS OF COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS TRANSMISSION

In response to the Covid-19 virus, in order to reduce possible transmission, I am introducing the following special pastoral measures in the Diocese of Lancaster, effective from 5th March 2020 to 21st March 2020.

- 1) The sign of peace is to be suspended at Mass. In order not to create confusion in the minds of the lay faithful, I request that all priests simply omit any reference to the offering of the sign of peace, prior to the *Agnus Dei*.
- 2) Holy Communion from the chalice shall cease to be offered to the lay faithful. The practice of intinction is not to be introduced as an alternative.
- 3) Those who choose to receive the Sacred Host on the tongue should be encouraged to receive on the hand instead. Their doing this represents an act of loving charity to their community. Alternatively, they should be encouraged to make a 'Spiritual Communion'.
- 4) Use of holy water stoups in churches and chapels is to be suspended.
- 5) Churches and chapels that are open daily for private prayer should continue to remain open. Care should be given to ensuring that surfaces of high contact (e.g. light switches, door handles and areas around the door) are regularly sanitized throughout the day.
- 6) Ministers should wash and also sanitise their hands before and after distributing Holy Communion. Shared towels should not be used in toilet areas or the sacristy.
- 7) Shared hymnbooks and Mass books should ideally not be used at this time. Single-use Mass sheets may be used; though these should be carefully thrown-away after use.

Given at Lancaster on 5th March 2020

Signed,

+ Paul Swain

Bishop of Lancaster



Chancellor