

A number of US dioceses have issued statements responding to the current H1-N1 Virus situation. A number of these have appeared in various media. Bishop Gilmore asked that these recommendations be made available to Priests and Parish Life Coordinators of the Diocese of Dodge City:

*As the Center for Disease Control continues to monitor the issue of this terrible flu, Bishop Gilmore assures you and your parishioners that our diocese will remain vigilant in the event that some liturgical practices might have to be suspended to avoid spreading the disease.*

*In the meantime, Bishop Gilmore encourages everyone to use common sense, which seems to be the current recommendation from civil authorities.*

*1. Keep public areas clean, in particular public rest rooms and kitchen facilities. It is recommended that disinfectant wipes be available in these areas so that someone can wipe an area clean as needed.*

*2. Wash liturgical vessels thoroughly with soap and hot water after every Mass and be sure kitchen items are appropriately cleaned after every event.*

*3. Germs are spread most readily from person to person. Ask liturgical ministers and volunteers scheduled for Masses and events to remain home when they are ill. Some seem at times to feel they are being negligent if they do not show up, even when ill.*

*4. Make available water-free hand sanitizer at the credence table and ask Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to use it before distributing holy communion after the sign of peace. Please do this as unobtrusively as possible. When others see them taking this precaution, it is an appreciated gesture to the congregation. This has been standard practice for some years in other American and Canadian dioceses.*

*5. Should the flu become more of a health hazard in our area, Bishop Gilmore will make appropriate announcements regarding the suspension of certain liturgical practices during the epidemic. In the meantime, let us pray that God will protect our communities and grant those who are ill healing, comfort and recovery.*