

*The Most Reverend Anne Germond*



**DIOCESE OF ALGOMA**  
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Thursday March 5, 2020

**Follow up note to the Diocese of Algoma and Moosonee regarding extra precautions during the Corona Virus Outbreak.**

Dear friends in Christ,

As the Corona Virus continues to spread around the world, numbers of dioceses and denominations are taking extra precautions regarding best practices for hygiene during Eucharist and at other services.

I prepared a [pastoral letter](#) to the dioceses of Algoma and Moosonee outlining some general guidelines which I ask that you re-familiarize yourself with.

In addition to these I ask that during the time of the outbreak:

- We refrain from handshaking during the Peace. There are all kinds of friendly alternatives including waves, eye to eye contact, smiles, and bowing as gestures for greeting of peace.
- At the end of worship clergy are asked to greet members of the congregation verbally only.
- That you assure parishioners that the entire altar party will be washing their hands before the service and will use hand sanitizer before the Liturgy of the Table.
- That Eucharistic Assistants are reminded about the proper way of cleaning the chalice after each person has received the wine, and that more than one purificator is used during communion.
- That hand sanitizer be made available to parishioners.
- Intinction (the dipping of the bread into the wine) is disallowed. Intinction does little to avoid the spread of disease and may actually increase the spread, as the bread or wafer spends more time in the (possibly unclean hand) before being dipped into the wine.

- Individuals should decide for themselves whether to use the common cup. It is more than acceptable to receive in 'one kind' only, or to abstain altogether and receive a blessing. Please indicate your desire to receive a blessing by crossing your arms over your chest.

Clergy are asked to communicate all of the above to their parishioners at the beginning of the service on March 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>, and to prepare a pew card with directions about all of the above on it. This should be included in the bulletins in the next several weeks.

You may also wish to undertake the following precautionary measures in the church:

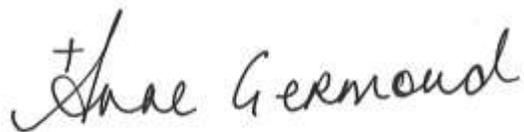
- Wipe down door knobs, altar rails, and the tops of pews with disinfectant wipes after each service (particularly when there is more than one on a Sunday), since the virus can last for more than an hour on hard surfaces.
- Ensure that all toys in the nursery or Sunday School are cleaned after each service and remove all stuffed animals from the nursery.
- Keep in mind parishioners who have compromised immune systems and may choose to self-isolate themselves during the outbreak. Remember to stay in touch with them.
- Best hygiene practice should be observed in all pastoral contacts.

Above all, I ask that you plan well for any possible outbreak in your community but do not panic.

*“Holy and gracious God, give us strength to meet the health crisis growing in our world. Enlighten researchers that they may discover the right vaccine against this disease. Bring together agencies around the world that they may work together to eradicate this health crisis. Guide the doctors and nurses and all medical staff working with those who are infected that they may be protected as they care for their patients. We pray for those who are ill or isolated because of this virus, that they may know your love and care as it comes to them through human hands. We pray also for those who have died and for the bereaved that they will know the consolation of your love. Keep us mindful of our responsibilities during this time of anxiety and enable us to do all we can in our homes, churches and communities to alleviate the risk of spreading the virus. All this we ask through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen”*

*(Excerpts from Episcopal Church – Diocese of Virginia)*

I remain yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Anne Germond". The signature is written in dark ink on a white background.

The Most Rev. Anne Germond  
Archbishop of Algoma and Moosonee