

DECREE

June 1, 2023

Feast of St. Justin Martyr

Whereas, the SARS Covid 2 virus arrived in the United States around the beginning of the year of Our Lord 2020, and SARS Covid 2 was preceded by a SARS outbreak in 2003 with a fatality rate as high as 55% in people over 65,

Whereas, the civil authorities on advice from the health experts instituted a series of practical measures to safeguard the people, and

Whereas, in 2020, the Catholic bishops in the United States provided guidance to pastors for worshipping the Creator while respecting His commandment "Thou shalt not kill", and

Whereas, on May 11 of this year, the President of the United States proclaimed the end of the Federal Covid 19 Public Health Emergency,

As Bishop of the Eparchy of Passaic, and Apostolic Administrator of the Eparchy of Parma, the Eparchy of the Protection of the Mother of God in Phoenix, and the Exarchy of SS Cyril and Methodius in Toronto, I declare that all temporary safeguards for the SARS Covid 2 virus are no longer mandatory in all these jurisdictions.

I offer the following guidance for distributing the Holy Eucharist at all services:

If the parish is using individual spoons of whatever kind, the option for a single use spoon should continue to be available at the request of the faithful. Even without the pandemic, there are good and rational reasons why someone might prefer or require an individual spoon. For the sake of medical privacy, no one need provide a reason to exercise the option. The individual spoons should be placed near the entrance to the Church with an explanatory note, and each person desiring to use an individual spoon must take one when entering the Church and bring it to the person distributing the Eucharist at the time of reception. In addition, the priest may drink from a separate chalice if it seem desirable in a particular community.

I adjure every priest and deacon to ensure that spoons that have touched the sacred Flesh and Blood be placed in a condign container such as a chalice or crystal vessel and handled with the greatest of reverence until cleaned or destroyed according to tradition. They should not be left outside the iconostasis after communion.

The Lord gives and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord. I commend all of you to the prayers of St. Justin Martyr and his companions, to the prayers of Sts. Cosmas and Damian, to the prayers of St. Pantalemon the Great Martyr, to the prayers of St. Damian of Molokai, to the fatherly protection of St. Joseph, and especially to the care of the all holy Mother of God.

+ Kurt

Most Rev. Kurt Burnette

Eparchial Bishop of Passaic

Apostolic Administrator of Parma

Apostolic Administrator of the Eparchy of the Holy Protection of the Mother of God in Phoenix

Apostolic Administrator of the Exarchy of SS Cyril and Methodius in Toronto

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Ecclesiastical Notary

