**The following guidelines regarding the Eucharist are extracted from the HSE guidelines. Note that many other issues are covered in the guidelines, e.g. visiting the sick. Please read the full guidelines.**

**General recommendations for all:**

* People including clergy who are ill and may haveCOVID-19 should not attend religious services.
* We suggest that physical interaction during religious services, **including the Sign of Peace, should be suspended.**
* Because COVID-19 is a new disease and appears to spread easily between people, we advise that church holy water fonts should not be used.

**Holy Communion**

* Using communal vessels for food and drink during religious services, e.g. drinking from the Chalice during Holy Communion in Christian services: To minimise the risk of spread of infection, **the use of communal vessels should be suspended**.
* For example, during Holy Communion in Christian religious services **only the celebrant should drink from the Chalice.**
* No one else should drink from the Chalice–this includes other priests, ministers of the Eucharist and members of the congregation.
* Alternatives to direct sharing of the Chalice **should also be AVOIDED** including

**1)** Intinction and **2)** Distribution of Communion wine through individual small cups

* **Holy Communion should be administered into the hands only and NOT onto the tongue**
* Everyone administering Holy Communion should use alcohol based hand gel before beginning.
* Alcohol based hand gel should be available and used. **Eucharistic ministers should use hand gel rather than hand washing.**

All bathroom facilities and wash-hand basins should be maintained to a high standard of cleanliness.

Diocesan office 2 March 2020.