

CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF OSAKA

24-22 TAMATSUKURI 2-CHOME CHUO-KU,
OSAKA 540-0004, JAPAN 540-0004 2-24-22
tel 06-6941-9700 fax 06-6946-1345

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Dear Parishioners

Measures taken in association with new coronavirus infection (19th round)

+Peace of the Lord.

As we enter the Lenten season, we have begun our journey towards the Holy Easter.
Let us walk together during these times.

The eighth wave of the new coronavirus infection has finally begun to subside, and the instructions from the government and other administrative agencies are gradually easing. We hope that church activities will return to normal as much as possible accordingly. Therefore, we are announcing the following measures.

The following measures are only basic, so kindly consider the situation at each locality and after careful consideration decide on the application of these measures

1. Sunday Masses at parishes

(a) Basic Points

1 Disinfection: Continue to place disinfectant near the entrance so that those who wish to disinfect can do so. In principle, it is no longer necessary for priests and ushers to disinfect before giving Communion or for the faithful to disinfect before receiving Communion, or for the pews to be disinfected after Mass.

2 Wearing masks: In principle, it is optional. Wearing a mask is optional if there is a certain amount of ventilation, the seating capacity is within the maximum number of people, and the volume of the congregation's voice is at the level of normal conversation, such as when reciting prayers. If the whole congregation sings together in a chant, wearing a mask is recommended for the time being. The presiding priest, moderator, and readers do not need to wear masks.

3 Holy water may be placed at the entrance to the sanctuary.

(b) Exemptions from the obligation to attend Mass on the Lord's Day and the Mass designated as the Lord's Day (First of the Five Precepts of the Church) are suspended. However, as has always been the case, there is no obligation to attend Mass if one is unable to do so due to illness or unavoidable circumstances.

(2) For sacraments other than the Mass (Baptism, Confirmation, Sacrament of Unction, Anointing of the Sick), weddings, wakes, and funerals, the decision should be made in accordance with point no.1 above.

(3) For gatherings outside of Mass (meetings, study groups, bazaars, music concerts, etc.), please follow the same procedure as in point no. 1 above. The same applies when food and drink are involved.

(4) For Masses and gatherings outside of Mass at monasteries and other facilities outside of the parish, please use your own judgment in accordance with point no. 1 above.

Some people may or may not be able to wear a mask depending on their professional or family circumstances, health situation, or physical constitution. Please understand and consider each person's situation so that there will be no criticism or discrimination based on the prevention of infection.

Let us spend the season of Lent in prayer, temperance, and works of love and virtue, and let us walk together so that we can celebrate Easter with joy.

Archbishop Maeda Manyo

*Major foreign language versions will be posted on our website in due course.