



Dear Fathers,

Wishing you Christ's peace as we collectively navigate the significant uncertainty and anxiety caused by this unprecedented pandemic. Please know our prayers are with each of you as you minister to those in your parishes and communities, perhaps in new ways.

Many of you may have questions about ministering to people in hospitals and healthcare facilities during this time, particularly if asked to provide sacramental care for COVID-19 patients.

This is a little tricky as every hospital/facility has different policies and procedures in place. There is no uniformity. Some hospitals have outright barred all visitors, including clergy. Others will allow it, but have stringent and varying protocols for visitors, possibly including health screenings, wearing personal protective equipment, providing care from windows/doorways, or utilizing phone/video equipment, etc. If you are able to provide sacramental care, please follow all the particular guidelines and procedures set by the particular hospital to ensure everyone's health and safety.

We are also aware that many of you are within the age bracket that concerns the CDC or are more susceptible to the disease due to other health conditions. Please know that providing care in hospitals is entirely at your discretion based on your comfort or vulnerability level.

Given the many barriers blocking standard spiritual care, many of you are seeking alternative approaches that are still valid and appropriate. To help with this, we have included a Q & A document from the National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC) and a document regarding Perfect Contrition and Spiritual Communion.

Please know that our archdiocesan Hospital & Healthcare Ministry stands ready to assist you in any way during this time. Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions or concerns.

God bless!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Joe Cotton'.

Joe Cotton
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