



# Office of the Bishop

Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island  
5732 College Street, Halifax, N.S., B3H 1X3

**To:** All Clergy  
**From:** Bishop Sue  
**Date:** April 29, 2009

1. There have been many questions about safe practice in relation to the Eucharist.
  - All those who will handle the bread or the chalice must clean their hands before doing so. Soap and water or the various hand sanitizers, should be available, be used and be seen to be used.
  - Intinction is not an acceptable practice. Hands are the biggest source of contamination. If someone does not wish to drink from the common cup then they should receive the bread only.
  - There is no evidence at this time to discontinue the use of the common cup.
  - People who are sneezing, sniffing or coughing should not be distributing communion. This includes the clergy.
  - Many public buildings now have hand sanitizer dispensers at the entries. Your congregation may wish to consider this.
  - Shaking hands at the Peace is a good sign of being at peace with God and neighbour. However, hands spread germs. Use hand cleanser after the Peace and before receiving the bread and wine.
2. King's-Edgehill School has taken all the necessary precautions and, according to the latest phone call, the students are doing well.
3. If any disease causes the Provincial Health Officer to suggest that congregations do not gather in order to decrease the risk of spreading disease, or hospitals and homes for care are closed to visitors, you will need to have a plan for staying in touch with your parishioners. You and your Parish Council should work this out now in order to be prepared.

I hope that this is helpful. We must do what is appropriate to reduce the risk of disease, because we are about the ministry of healing. At the same time, we must continue to worship God and care for the people entrusted to our care.

Easter Blessings.

SEM/kja