



SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

PREVENTION AND MITIGATION PLAN FOR COVID-19 VIRUS

This plan is intended to provide guidance on policies and procedures which the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe has in place to prevent the transmission of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). This plan was developed in light of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for faith-based organizations, Diocesan guidelines, and the advice of local area medical professionals.

The Mission of the Shrine

The Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in La Crosse, Wisconsin, faithful to the message of the Blessed Virgin Mary through her appearances on the American continent in 1531, serves the spiritual needs of those who suffer poverty in body and soul. It is a place of ceaseless prayer for the corporal and spiritual welfare of God's children, especially those in most need.

The Shrine's mission most certainly embraces the tremendous need of prayer in the present health-crisis.

Keeping Staff, Volunteers and Pilgrims Safe

COVID-19 Advisory Committee: A Shrine advisory committee consisting of local medical, safety, legal, janitorial, and communications professionals has been established to review this COVID-19 plan on an ongoing basis.

Staff, Volunteer, and Pilgrim Hygiene: Staff and volunteers are encouraged to take extra care to wash their hands often throughout the day. The Shrine is equipped with multiple facilities to provide for proper hygiene. During this public health crisis, restrooms will remain fully stocked with all of the necessary items for proper hand washing. Additionally, hand sanitizer is available in multiple locations throughout the Shrine grounds. Furthermore, individuals are advised to cover coughs and sneezes with facial tissues available in restrooms and common areas or use the inside of their elbow. To prevent infection, individuals should also avoid touching their face.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedure: Per CDC guidelines, all high traffic areas and common surface areas will be sanitized with bleach solution and commercial disinfectant sprays throughout the day. Additional disinfectant spray bottles and paper towels are available from the maintenance department for the use of staff and volunteers. All staff members are asked to keep their personal areas clean and disinfected.

Social Distancing: Staff, volunteers, and pilgrims are asked to maintain the recommended 6 feet of distance from each other, when possible. Signage will be placed in the Shrine Church, asking pilgrims to sit in family groups and observe proper distancing from others. To observe optimal distancing on the Meditation Trail, pilgrims who are physically able will be encouraged to walk, and pilgrims who are in need of assistance with transportation will be asked to use the back seat of 6-person golf carts.

Consideration for Staff and Volunteers: If a staff member or volunteer does not feel well, he or she is asked to remain at home and encouraged to see a doctor, especially if the individual is exhibiting symptoms of the coronavirus. Staff members and volunteers should be particularly attentive to their health, lest they contaminate others with the virus and cause a situation of quarantine. For staff and volunteers who are 60 years of age or older, if they have other health complications, the Shrine recommends that they remain at home. If such employees or volunteers wish to come to work, they are advised to continue using the precautions indicated. Any female staff member who is pregnant should consult her doctor and do what is best for her baby and herself. The staff member's welfare and the welfare of her baby are a preeminent concern.

Public Signage: Signage has been placed at the main Shrine entrance asking visitors who are exhibiting any of the following symptoms: **cough, fever, or shortness of breath**, not to enter the building. A help number for local medical facilities is provided. A number is also provided for those seeking the Sacraments. Upon entering, signage is also present to ask all visitors to utilize the provided hand sanitizer station at the front desk, or wash their hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.

Person(s) with Symptoms: Per the direction of local health professionals, any staff members, volunteers, or pilgrims who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 will be asked to leave immediately and advised to seek medical treatment at an area treatment center. Additionally, the Shrine maintenance department will take proper disinfecting measures for any potentially affected area.

Confirmed Infection: If it is determined that an infected person has visited the Shrine, the Shrine will take appropriate actions in accord with CDC and Wisconsin Department of Health Services guidelines.

Shrine Devotions: The Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate will be offering the daily Mass privately, that is, without public announcement or the invitation of the public. Until further notice, the Friars will not be offering the Holy Mass publicly. On feast days, the veneration of the relics will continue by way of a general blessing with the relic by the priest. The daily Shrine Church tour is canceled until further notice. The daily holy hour will continue as normal.

Crisis Communications: The Shrine communications department will keep staff, volunteers, pilgrims, and benefactors informed of any updates provided by the COVID-19 Advisory Committee. Communications will be made through the Shrine website, social media, email, and other appropriate means. A FAQs sheet has been developed and provided to assist staff and volunteers with inquiries regarding COVID-19.

Important Note: This plan remains in effect until further notice. This health crisis is developing rapidly. Any necessary updates will be provided as developments take place.

Updated: March 18, 2020