Addendum: Ash Wednesday
Guidelines for Sacramental Celebrations in a Health Care Setting

In light of ongoing concerns about the transmission of coronavirus in group and close settings, the Vatican has released guidance around the distribution of ashes for this year. You can find the statement here: http://www.cultodivino.va/content/cultodivino/it/documenti/note/nota-mercoledi-delle-cenere/english.html

Mindful of the dignity and value of those entrusted to our care as well as the unique vulnerabilities of those who are sick, elderly and immune compromised, the guidelines suggested for health care facilities are more restrictive than the Vatican guidance due to their greater risk for infection than the general population.

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<th>General Guidelines</th>
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<td><strong>Phase One</strong></td>
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<td><em>Phase 1 refers to the period of “surge” or extreme pandemic response</em></td>
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**Imposition of Ashes**
- Consider alternative prayer opportunities and include language common to the imposition of ashes without physical contact
- The imposition of ashes may go on as described by the Vatican 1.12.21 instruction, i.e. blessing of ashes and distribution via sprinkling over the person's head. Ministers must sanitize their hands before and after the ritual, per person.

**General Considerations for decision making**
- Most chapels are currently closed due to occupancy and space issues.
- Items brought into one patients’ room may not be brought into a another. Communal containers of ashes should not be used.
- Many facilities may still have restrictions on volunteer ministries at this time. Oftentimes volunteers lead Ash Wednesday prayer services or distribute ashes to patients.