Religious Support for Patients during COVID-19 Pandemic

At Mercy, we cherish each person as created in the image and likeness of God. Our Mercy core values of Dignity and Justice as well as the principle of the Common Good, as understood within our Catholic moral and social traditions, always underpin and guide our response to patients, coworkers, and the community in general. This is especially true during times of crisis. For the safety of our patients and our community, we are limiting visitors.

- Please encourage your church members to provide their prayer and support for hospitalized patients through phone calls, emails, text messages, and cards.
- Community clergy partners should refrain from visiting hospitalized patients unless the patient is in an exceptional circumstance or nearing end of life.
- If an in-person visit becomes necessary, please contact the hospital chaplain for clearance to visit the patient.
- If your religious tradition has rites or rituals necessary at pivotal life stages, please be sure to let the Mercy chaplain know what needs may exist and how together we can facilitate those rites or rituals when you visit.
- Make every effort to schedule your visit during normal business hours so that we can assist you in accessing your patient and utilizing the appropriate protective equipment.
- Community clergy are expected to follow all guidelines for screening, hand hygiene, and personal protective equipment (e.g. gown, mask, gloves, etc).
- We encourage all other spiritual care to be provided by phone, FaceTime or Google Duo, text, email, or other use of technology.

At Mercy, all patients and their families have access to free WIFI. We encourage patients and their families to use WIFI or our closed-circuit TVs to access religious services. In many of our facilities, we offer Mass which can be viewed on the closed-circuit TV. Mass is no longer open to the public and is intended for broadcast within the local hospital only.

Mercy chaplains remain available to provide on-site spiritual care for admitted patients as well as telephonic spiritual care for patients at home. We understand the anxiety and fear pervasive in the world around us in this moment. These new guidelines are intended to provide for the spiritual needs of our patients and help keep our communities safe. Thank you for your support, your understanding, and your prayers for our patients and the many clinicians caring for them daily.