



Diocese of  
Lafayette-in-Indiana

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Wednesday, May 6, 2020

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As we continue in this Easter Season, may the radiance of our Risen Christ bless you in faith, hope and charity.

The Catholic bishops of Indiana announced today, May 6, that across the state we will begin resuming public liturgies by May 30, the Vigil of Pentecost. There will be limitations based on public health information and on the need for planning for an orderly restart. Each diocese will have its particular rules published as they apply to needs and circumstances in that diocese, and ours should be public in the next couple of days.

We are grateful for our governor's statements and his presentation of stages for relaxing social distancing. We are mindful of the state's guidelines. Worship and ministry present unique challenges, and out of great care for health and safety of our churches and our civic communities, we will have our own timelines. We estimate that there are about 130,000 Catholics across our 24 Indiana counties, and it takes a lot of planning to direct that amount of traffic.

All of us have a deep desire for open church buildings, daily public Mass, and the availability of Confession. However, this announcement and our initial efforts aim at reestablishing public Saturday-Sunday worship. These Masses will fulfill requirements of social distancing and the need for face masks, hand sanitizers, and adequate cleaning of worship spaces between Masses.

The dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass automatically is given to anyone who is sick. And of course, you should not come to church if you have an illness. The dispensation is extended until August 15 this year.

We are in a pandemic. Our knowledge about it grows from day to day, and the information we get will tell us when we can advance and when we have to pull back. What works in a parish of 100 families may not work in a parish of one thousand or four thousand households. So we have to be patient with ourselves and with our neighboring parishes and try our best.

I ask for God's grace and healing. May God bless you all. May God take care of you all.

In Christ's Peace,  
Bishop Timothy Doherty