



DIOCESE OF BOISE

June 26, 2020

Bishop Peter Christensen issued the following statement today:

As you know, Governor Brad Little announced on June 25 that Idaho remains in Stage Four of the Idaho Rebounds Guidelines for at least the next two weeks. Some counties have reverted to Stage Three. Regardless of where your county is, we continue to urge the following:

- Maintain the six (6) foot physical distancing requirement.
- Disinfect your facilities and regularly clean them, especially high-touch areas.
- Provide prevention supplies such as hand sanitizer, tissues and trash cans.
- Encourage anyone who enters the place of worship to wash hands or use hand sanitizer prior to or just after entering the building.
- In those parishes in cities where the mayor has mandated the use of masks, Bishop Peter is kindly asking the faithful to wear a mask during church gatherings. In all other places, if you wish to use face coverings, you are encouraged to do so.
- Ask all to self-monitor for fever or symptoms of COVID-19 and refrain from entering the building if there is any concern about possible infection.
- Recommend that the faithful refrain from hugging or handshaking.

With the Governor's decision to remain in Stage 4, these provisions remain in place:

- **Mass Dispensation.** I will continue to dispense with the obligation to attend Mass for those over the age of 60, for those who are immunocompromised, and for those whose anxiety about their health makes them apprehensive about attending Mass.

- **Communion to the Faithful Under One Species:** Parishes will continue to offer only the Body of Christ to the faithful—for now, only clergy will receive from the chalice. A decision at a later date will be made as to *when* all may receive from the Cup;
- **Restoration of Sacrament of Reconciliation:** If currently suspended, the sacrament of reconciliation must be offered to the faithful;
- **Sign of Peace:** Respectfully showing a sign of peace will be a gesture the faithful may determine for themselves.
- **Resumption of Other Prayer/Devotional Services:** Normal devotions such as holy hours, Exposition/Adoration, etc., may resume;
- **Ministries to the Sick and Homebound:** Ministries to those who are unable to attend Mass should continue, including the distribution of Holy Communion; those ministers who visit facilities such as hospitals and nursing homes will do so only insofar as they are in compliance with policies in place in those institutions;
- **Receptacles for the collection:** Long handled offertory baskets are recommended.

Again, all of these are recommended unless otherwise indicated by state and local guidelines. As always during this time, I will monitor the situation and all recommendations/requirements made by the governor's task force and the Center for Disease Control, and communicate any changes to you, either directly or through the appropriate office.

Let me take this opportunity to thank all of you for your excellent work. Due to your patient, hopeful leadership, your diligence, and your common sense, we have weathered and will continue to weather a very difficult time. I ask you to continue to model not fear, but responsible care for each other.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Tish Thornton (tthornton@rcdb.org) or Marisela Baca (mbaca@rcdb.org) in the Chancery office.