

LITURGIES RESUME MAY 2

Governor Brad Little's plan to begin opening the state for normal activity permits churches to open on May 1 "if they adhere to strict physical distancing, sanitation protocol, and any CDC guidance."

Consequently, Bishop Peter Christensen informed priests on Friday afternoon, April 24, that celebrations of Mass with the faithful will resume at the Vigil Mass of Saturday, May 2. Masses and other liturgies, such as weddings and funerals, may continue from then on as long as state-established criteria for social distancing and sanitation protocols are met and barring a re-imposition of a closure by the Governor if the state were to experience a resurgence of coronavirus cases.

Bishop Peter's Dispensation from the Sunday Obligation for those 60 and older, for those who are immunocompromised and for those who have judged it prudent for their health and safety to stay at home remains in place until the final phase of the Governor's directive, which, as of today, is June 26.

The Bishop's memorandum to priests throughout the state of Idaho outlines a number of steps that parishes can take to minimize contact with surfaces and ensure social distancing (six feet between individuals with families counting as a single unit). The faithful will be asked not to congregate before or after Mass, going directly to their seats and leaving immediately afterward. There will be no distribution of the Precious Blood and, out of concern for the health of others,

the faithful will be asked to receive communion on the hand.
Only clergy will distribute communion.

More details will be announced early next week.

“Although these are not ideal conditions for the celebration of Mass, we are blessed to be able to gather again. I thank you for your patience, your diligent care of your community, and your obvious faith through this difficult time,” the Bishop wrote the priests. “I pray that soon Idaho, and the world, will be delivered from this pandemic.”