



May 12, 2020

Dear brothers and sisters,

I write today to share some measure of hope during this difficult time of pandemic and social distancing. In recent weeks, we have watched with relief as our State of Michigan gradually opened to select businesses and activities, with prudent precautions firmly in place to prevent a severe “second wave” of the coronavirus pandemic. In keeping with this gradual reopening of our society, it is necessary that we make similar arrangements within our local Church to allow once again for the communal celebration of Holy Mass, which at its core is the most “essential” activity known to our world.

In these liturgical directives you will see details for the return to public Mass on May 19, 2020. The most important category of individuals to participate at Mass at this time should be those preparing to enter the Catholic Church in the weeks ahead. These directives will need strict adherence for all public liturgies, including weddings, funerals, and baptisms. The Mass you may attend in the weeks ahead will look and feel quite different from the Mass you remember from two months ago. It will be imperative for all of us – pastors, parish staff, volunteers, and all the faithful – to work together during these times. The pandemic is not over and safety precautions must be followed in order to promote the continued health and safety of everyone in our community.

Additionally I am sharing with you updated liturgical guidelines, which have been assembled by the COVID-19 Liturgical Committee. These guidelines have taken into account expert advice from the medical community, liturgical experts, and public health leaders. They are meant to assist pastors and the faithful in safely participating in Holy Mass while maintaining the sound health precautions counseled by health and government officials. Through it all, we must remember that this virus does not discriminate between gatherings; a group gathered for sacred worship is not immune by the merits of its gathering. It is only through our careful observance of these precautions that we make it possible to resume public Mass. For more information about all these guidelines and other resources, please visit www.aod.org/emergencyresponse.

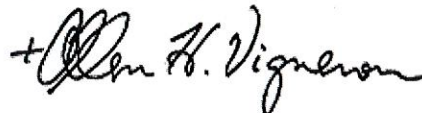
When this pandemic began, I directed priests of the Archdiocese of Detroit to suspend all public Masses as we assessed the situation and explored a safe way to bring Christ to the people, both through the Word of God and the Sacraments. This was an unfortunate but necessary decision in light of the severity of the pandemic and the number of unknowns associated with this new and deadly virus. Know that I have prayed during this time for you, the faithful of southeast Michigan, especially during my private and live

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streamed Masses. I pray you have felt the loving comfort of Christ as you awaited the day you could return to his Real Presence in the Eucharist. And I rejoice with you and thank God today as we move toward the gradual reopening of our parish communities.

Asking the continued intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Allen H. Vigneron". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

The Most Reverend Allen H. Vigneron
Archbishop of Detroit