



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

Office of the Bishop

April 24, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

I know how extremely difficult this last month without receiving the Eucharist has been. I thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate these uncharted waters. While I wish we could completely reopen and resume our normal lives our Catholic duty is to protect the common good by not spreading a potentially deadly disease.

Following consultation with doctors in West Michigan, **the Diocese of Grand Rapids has extended its cancellation of ALL public Masses and all other liturgical and devotional services through May 17, 2020.** This order is in harmony with Governor Whitmer's updated stay-at-home order.

The transitional diaconate ordination scheduled for Saturday, May 16 will be privately celebrated and livestreamed for the public on the diocesan website and Facebook page.

All Catholics within the territory of the Diocese of Grand Rapids are granted a dispensation from their obligation of attending Sunday Mass through June 30. Priests are to continue to celebrate Mass each day without a congregation.

I know the desire to return to your parishes and receive the Eucharist is incredibly strong. Health officials and government leaders are determining new guidance for how to safely reopen. The Diocese of Grand Rapids is working on similar plans. The specific details are still being determined. It is important to remember that when we are able to resume public Masses that they will likely not look the same. I ask for your patience and understanding.

You are encouraged to unite yourself with Jesus during this time by making a [spiritual Communion during the televised and livestreamed Masses](#). Families are invited to use this time to pray together. Let us renew our efforts to turn to the Lord. Spiritual resources can be found on the diocesan website, grdiocese.org.

During this time the [directives from April 8](#) remain in place.

For up-to-date information about the Diocese of Grand Rapids' response to the COVID-19 pandemic, visit <http://bit.ly/GRdioceseCOVID19Updates>.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak
Bishop of Grand Rapids