



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER

June 2, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

As you know and, in fact have experienced in some ways, we continue to navigate these unfamiliar waters that are called a pandemic. In purposeful and prudent movements forward, we have been meeting daily and for long periods during these many weeks preparing the way to bring the Lord's flock back into safe and green pastures. Now, based on public health guidance from federal, state and local resources, I announced on May 29, 2020 that the preparations we have been making have resulted in our beginning to resume the "Celebration of Mass With a Congregation" (*the correct phrase as printed in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal*). The information that follows implements advice and requirements from public health authorities and, most importantly respects what we require for the proper and dignified celebration of our Roman Catholic Holy Mass. In a spirit of the virtue of true charity, and in order to best protect the health and well-being of all of our brothers and sisters, the information that follows is to be utilized in all Diocese of Manchester locations.

Our coming together in church for Mass, baptisms, weddings, funerals and other liturgical worship as a community will undoubtedly seem a little different in the days ahead. In fact, a noticeable difference that is already quite striking is the deep reverence and attention of all as they are receiving Holy Communion! May THIS difference remain among us always!

I ask that you keep in mind, then, that the measures we are implementing at this time do not lessen or damage our liturgical celebrations. In fact, certain attention will remind us that this is GOD'S House. His House deserves the very best of attention to cleanliness, awareness and respect. Not only that, but for several weeks our priests have been engaged in a study of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal to reacquaint themselves with the actual rubrics and directives of the Universal and local Church in the United States. This has been a time of "active waiting" for the long desired "full, conscious and active participation" of which the Second Vatican Council spoke in the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. May the fruit of all who have labored and all who have prayed for us and patiently remained faithful be crowned with God's grace and our gratitude.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Peter A. Libasci
Bishop of Manchester