



DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

July 14, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ:

The rising number of infections and deaths due to COVID-19 is alarming. Even as we exercise all the necessary precautions in our churches, the risk of infection is greater. Governor Gavin Newsom announced on Monday, July 13, 2020, the suspension of most indoor activities, including church services in thirty counties in the State of California. I urge the faithful to cooperate with State and local public health officials. The counties affected in our diocese are: **Colusa, Glenn, Placer, Sacramento, Solano, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba**, effective immediately.

I have asked the pastors and parochial administrators of the parishes in these counties to consider offering the sacrifice of the Mass outdoors. These celebrations, following the diocesan directives, will continue to provide for the safety of the faithful. In particular, pastors should take into account weather conditions and high temperatures in scheduling the times for Mass. I have asked the pastors to continue transmitting the Mass by livestreaming or other means.

The celebration of *indoor* Mass will continue for parishes in counties not included in the list: Siskiyou, Modoc, Trinity, Shasta, Lassen, Tehama, Plumas, Butte, Sierra, Nevada, El Dorado, and Amador.

We must remain vigilant, especially for the sake of the most vulnerable among us. All the faithful in the Diocese of Sacramento are asked to review the guidelines noted in the *Coming Back to the Table* document: <https://www.scd.org/comingbacktothetable>. The required use of face-coverings, contact tracing protocols, and physical-distancing continue to be prudent safeguards during this dreadful plague.

The dangerous surge of infections and deaths due to the COVID-19 pandemic is disheartening and threatening, especially for the most vulnerable of our community. May the Lord Jesus grant us the patience, diligence, and charity necessary to care for one another. Pray for the Lord's mercy to end this pandemic. May the intercession of our Blessed Mother Mary bring healing to all the afflicted, protection to their caregivers, eternal rest to all those who have died, and consoling comfort to their families and friends.

Respectfully,

+Jaime Soto
Bishop of Sacramento