



Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany

40 North Main Avenue, Albany, New York 12203

Date: May 14, 2020

To: Pastors, Parish Administrators, and Parish Life Coordinators

From: Fathers David LeFort and Bob Longobucco

RE: **Updates & Reminders during COVID-19 Pandemic**

Updates

As of this writing, several offices of our diocese continue to draft overall plans and general strategies for re-entry and, while NYS is moving toward that direction, we obviously are not at re-entry yet.¹ Yes, many questions remain, but there are some steps that all of us can take at the local level in preparation for re-entry. Each parish would do well to begin to establish a **Reopening Coordinating Committee** and a **Pandemic Safety Officer** in order to formulate a plan for re-entry², a group of able persons to consider such things as:

- What localized, specific plan will be best for our worship space and our community?
- When developing our plan, be sure to adhere to all governmental/health regulations
- How will the community be informed of the plan prior to re-entry?
- How will a limited number of people or family units enter into the worship space?
- In what direction will people use aisles and what seats need to be designated for occupancy?
- How will the space be sanitized after each worship service or use? Who will sanitize?
- How will we provide for people to make an offering to the church?
- How will distribution of Holy Communion flow?
- How will people exit the worship space at the conclusion?

Reminders

- At this time, the April 21 document entitled "**A Compendium and Summary of the Liturgical Principles, Instructions & Guidelines**" still remains in effect and thus retains its force. Please familiarize yourself with it, as it is extremely helpful when faced with liturgical questions or issues.
- The **Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord** will be observed on Thursday, May 21 this year. It may be helpful to remind the faithful of the current **temporary suspension of the obligation** to attend Mass on this Holy Day.

Let us continue to hold one another in our daily prayers for health, safety and holiness.

¹ We continue to monitor the regional approach set by the Governor and how it affects each of the parishes in our fourteen-county diocese.

² See "Guidelines for the Gradual Reintroduction of Public Liturgies and Worship, Preliminary Stage" (DRAFT of 5/14/20) and "Addendum C" also issued today.

*We are God's people sharing a responsibility to witness God's unconditional love
and to bring Christ's healing presence to our world.*