



Diocese of
CROOKSTON

www.crookston.org

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LETTER FROM BISHOP PATES RE: COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

May 21, 2021

Dear Brother Priests and Deacons, Parish Staffs and Leadership:

I am pleased to attach an update of the COVID-19 protocol practices for the Diocese of Crookston. This update takes effect on FRIDAY, MAY 28, 2021.

Heartfelt thanks are in order to all who have cooperated with the restrictions which have been in place for over a year. The reason for the practices was to mitigate the spread of the pandemic. Whatever sacrifices and inconveniences we experienced were expressions of charity, love of neighbor and commitment to the common good, all rooted in our Gospel identity.

As our churches return to full liturgical life, it behooves us not only to welcome back to our communities those who have regularly been with us in the past, but also extend a warm welcome to those who will be joining us for the first time.

In order to facilitate the opening wide of our Church doors and arms, a task force titled "Reunite in Christ" has been established under the leadership of Deacon Mark Krejci and Janelle Gergen. At the same time, I ask each pastor to establish a "Reunite in Christ" committee for every parish which will devise the specific plans for that parish and connect with the diocesan task force.

As we rejoice at the marvelous prospect of emerging from COVID-19, we also are energized by the unique opportunity of evangelization before us.

We continue to trust in God's providence and his never-failing love for us.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

MOST REVEREND RICHARD E. PATES
Apostolic Administrator
Diocese of Crookston



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THE DIOCESE OF CROOKSTON'S RETURN TO LITURGICAL PRACTICES: GUIDANCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

EFFECTIVE: FRIDAY, MAY 28, 2021

CROOKSTON, MINNESOTA, May 21, 2021 – In light of recent updates to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) pandemic-related guidance, Diocese of Crookston parishes and entities shall adopt the following “universal” guidelines to mitigate COVID-19:

- Encourage and support vaccination efforts.
- Wear a face covering when recommended by MDH or CDC.
- Those not vaccinated should keep 6 feet of physical distance from other households when possible and follow the face covering recommendations of MDH/CDC.
- Regardless of vaccination status, wash hands frequently; follow guidance on quarantine if exposed to someone who has COVID-19; stay home if sick; follow testing recommendations when travelling, having COVID-19 symptoms, or when exposed to the virus; and work from home when necessary.

Regarding liturgical practices and protocols, please note the following:

- There remain no capacity limits for religious services.
- There is no requirement to wear masks nor keep six feet of physical distance between households, however, pastors in dialogue with parish leadership can choose to keep one area of worship space for those choosing to mask and distance themselves.
- Continue to maintain a regular schedule of sanitation, including high touch surfaces.
- Hand sanitizer should remain available at entryways.
- Holy water in fonts, stoups and receptacles is allowed.
- Singing remains permissible. Use of hymnals and other worship aids, such as prayer cards and booklets can be placed in pews.
- Collection plates and other items can be passed person to person.
- Physical touch at the Sign of Peace is permissible.
- Holy Communion under both species and on the tongue is permissible.
- Altar Servers and all other liturgical ministers are permissible.

MOST REVEREND RICHARD E. PATES
Apostolic Administrator
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