



Diocese of Madison

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Catholics invited back to weekly Sunday Mass; safety protocols remain in place

MADISON — As has been circulated in recent days, the five Wisconsin bishops jointly decided to lift the suspension of the Sunday Mass obligation in their respective dioceses this month. For the Diocese of Madison, this suspension will be lifted beginning on Sunday, September 27th.

As Bishop Hying wrote to the priests of the diocese, “We have been living with the obligation suspended for almost six months and we rightly chose to be cautious, concerned for the safety and health of our people, especially at the beginning of the pandemic.”

Since late May, diocesan guidelines, observing all state and local orders for safe reopening of our 134 churches have been in place throughout the 11-county Diocese of Madison. These measures have proven effective. Our churches were reopened for public worship with limited capacity, distancing, and great caution for the public health, without any known spread of COVID-19.

We now invite all Catholics back to Sunday Mass, who can safely and securely do so. The elderly, the immunodeficient, and those who are still at increased risk may refrain from Sunday Mass attendance, without committing sin, as allowed by the Church’s canon law.

For Catholics, the celebration of Sunday Eucharist is the heart and center of who we are as children of God. It is the source and summit of the Christian life. Participating in the sacrifice of the Mass, we hear the Word and receive the Eucharist. We need the very real and sacred nourishment of the Mass, and as good and pious as watching Mass at home and making a spiritual communion has been for many these months of quarantine, this can never substitute for the efficacy of participating in even one celebration of the Eucharist.

There will naturally be a number of questions about what this means for individuals throughout the diocese. While the spiritual wellbeing of every person is our primary concern, we understand and know that COVID-19 still presents a risk for the vulnerable in our communities. To answer those questions, the Diocese of Madison will keep a list of frequently asked questions and their answers, attempting to alleviate serious concerns, assuage any fears, and give peace of mind to both those coming back to Mass after many months, as well as those remaining away from Mass for a longer period of time. [This list of FAQs and other updates can be found here. \(madisondiocese.org/updates\)](http://madisondiocese.org/updates)

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