



Diocese of Rockford

555 Colman Center Drive
P.O. Box 7044
Rockford, Illinois 61125

(815) 399-4300
Fax (815) 399-4769

Office of the Bishop

May 15, 2020

Dear Monsignor/Father,

As I mentioned in my letter dated May 13, 2020, the Diocese of Rockford has prepared a document with our own specific guidelines adapting the Chicago Province two-phase agreement for reopening to our diocesan circumstances.

Attached, please find that document entitled *Back in His Presence*, which outlines the practices and policies for the celebration of the Mass and for related health practices in this stage of reopening in our diocese. I know that this document is lengthy and detailed. But that is true of almost every document issued by dioceses and archdioceses for this situation that has never been encountered previously. This list, which may be reviewed or revised subsequently as guided by experience, serves to keep us united in our practice and in our efforts to keep the faithful safe during this challenging moment.

A webinar for leaders among the volunteers is currently being prepared by the Chicago Province and will be ready in the coming days. I am also attaching some **TRAINING PROCEDURES FOR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CHURCH SERVICES**. These have also been adapted to the circumstances of the Diocese of Rockford for training the volunteers who have agreed to assist in the various tasks related to resuming Mass in the presence of the faithful.

I cannot stress enough the importance of the full implementation of these guidelines. By starting with a small group we can prepare our procedures for what we hope will soon be larger gatherings of the faithful. In addition, because this deadly virus is not likely to disappear any time soon, we can use this opportunity to catechize and prepare the faithful to reverently attend Mass and receive the sacraments in the midst of the changes and precautions that we will probably need to observe for some time. Your priestly and pastoral leadership will be essential in this process.

If you have any questions, please refer them to Father Jon Bakkelund, Director of Liturgy for the Diocese of Rockford who can be reached at (reopen@rockforddiocese.org).

Again, brothers, thank you for your patience, support, prayers and your priestly example during this challenging moment.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *David J. Malloy*

Most Reverend David J. Malloy
Bishop of Rockford

Attachments