

A Message from Bishop Lou Tylka
March 27th, 2022

Dear Friends in Christ:

Just over two years ago, the world entered an unprecedented time as the Coronavirus pandemic began. No aspect of our lives went untouched, including the practice of our faith. From the onset, The Diocese of Peoria, in consort with the other dioceses in the State of Illinois, implemented protocols intended to protect the health and wellbeing of our brothers and sisters – the most vulnerable among us. I take this opportunity to acknowledge and honor all the sacrifices that were made, and to thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Now, having reached a point where many of the safety protocols are able to be lifted, the time has come to rescind the dispensation to attend Sunday Mass. This will occur on Palm Sunday, April 10th, 2022. Each year on this occasion, we mark Jesus' triumphant entrance into Jerusalem as we begin Holy Week. This year it will also mark our Church's triumphant renewal of Sunday worship. Having born the cross of the COVID-19 pandemic, Holy Week is a most fitting time to enter anew into the death and resurrection of Jesus and experience the renewed life of the Church as we celebrate the source and summit of our lives as Catholic Christians – The Most Holy Eucharist.

During the past couple of years, many of our parishes began the trustworthy practice of streaming their Masses and other liturgical events. I am glad to know that a number of our churches will continue this practice for the benefit of our sick and homebound. However, it must be noted that watching Mass on TV or via the internet (even when it is live-streamed) does not fulfill the Sunday obligation. As has always been the case, those who are ill or homebound, along with those who care for them, are not obliged to attend Mass. Furthermore, charity indicates that if you are contagious, you should stay home.

We have all suffered through this pandemic together; therefore, it will be a great blessing to fully welcome back all our brothers and sisters to Mass, particularly for our beautiful and deeply significant liturgies of Holy Week and Easter!

My dear friends, let us continue to pray for one another as many still struggle with matters related to the Coronavirus pandemic. We pray that Jesus' healing touch may come upon those who continue to suffer.

Mary, Mother of the Church, pray for us!

Peace and Prayers

+Louis Tylka

+Most Reverend Louis Tylka

Bishop of Peoria

