



April 30, 2020

Dear Father, Parish Director, Deacon,

As Catholics, the Eucharist is the “source and summit” of our spiritual lives. Being deprived of the public celebration of the Mass has been a tremendous hardship on both our people and our priests, who long to serve their people. As a Sacramental Church, the reception of Communion is an integral part of our faith and worship. We recognize how truly lost and empty we are without the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and without the reception of Jesus Christ, truly present in the Eucharist.

Now we look ahead to the time we return to celebrating Mass with our parish communities. We want to do this in a reasonable and responsible way, with the safety of our people and respect for our sacramental life our top priorities. To that end, we are issuing these directives, guidelines and considerations, to aid our parishes in the resumption of public Mass and demonstrate our commitment to protecting communities.

We understand the seriousness of this pandemic. We also understand the strong desire of our people to come together to worship God and these directives provide both a reasonable and responsible way to make that happen in the coming weeks.

Pandemic-induced anxieties, confinement to homes, fear of catching the virus, unemployment, and financial uncertainty have left people fearful and distressed. It is at times like these when the Church is most needed, bringing her message of faith, hope, and charity.

The Church, at its best, addresses and assists people through difficult times. Just because public Masses were suspended, doesn't mean the Church became inactive; far from it. The Church continues to serve its people and its community. As part of the State's Badger Bounce Back,

now is the time for the Catholic Comeback. Come Back to Sunday Mass; Come Back to Community; Come Back to our roots as a Eucharistic People; Come Back to Service; Come Back Home.

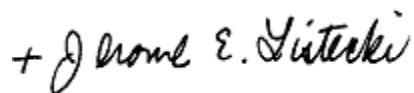
Just as we did at the Archdiocesan Synod in 2014, “this can be for us a new Pentecost.” So we will begin again, anew, on Pentecost Sunday, returning to the celebration of Sunday Mass beginning with Masses for Sunday, May 31. If circumstances warrant consideration of an earlier date, I will communicate that change directly with you. Let us focus our energy now on preparing for a safe return and let us proceed filled with faith and hope.

As we return, we must remember that some of our people will be anxious. It is important that we follow these Directives for the good of all. The last thing we would want is to contribute to a rebound of the virus that would again force a suspension of Masses down the road. Please contact Fr. Jerry Herda if you have questions about any variance from these Directives.

This is a moment for Evangelization. It is a moment for Formation in the Sacraments. It is a moment of Invitation. It is a moment for Christ, truly present in the Eucharist, to be truly present to His people through the ministry of the Church.

I am grateful for your leadership during the time of this pandemic. Please be assured of my prayers for you and for your people. Mary, Mother of the Church, pray for us.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Jerome E. Listecki". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jerome E. Listecki
Archbishop of Milwaukee