



DIOCESE OF PATERSON

Diocesan Center
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**Office of
THE BISHOP**

March 13, 2020

My Dear Friends in Christ,

Obligation for Sunday Mass to Address the Coronavirus situation

In keeping with my responsibility to attend to the spiritual and pastoral care of the Christian faithful of the Diocese of Paterson, I make the following provisions for all parishes and institutions of this local church (cf. Code of Canon Law, cc.381):

In light of the danger of the risk of contagion associated with the coronavirus (COVID-019), the sick, the elderly and those vulnerable through special health concerns and underlying conditions, are dispensed from the obligation to participate in Sunday Mass until further notice. Mass will continue to be celebrated in all our parishes and institutions.

Because of the risk of spreading the coronavirus, the faithful of the Diocese of Paterson may legitimately choose not to attend Sunday Mass until further notice. Those who choose to attend are urged to use caution and prudence through appropriate social distancing.

The liturgical guidelines recently issued remain in effect.

The governor has recommended that there be no large gatherings. I ask that, for all upcoming confirmations, only the candidate, sponsor and parents attend until further notice. Pastors should consider canceling other large liturgical gatherings of the faithful.

We will closely monitor the situation and make any adjustments as required for the safety and well-being of all.

I ask all the faithful to join together in prayer, especially to our Blessed Mother, that the Lord deliver us from this present danger.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Arthur J. Serratelli, S.T.D., S.S.L., D.D.
Bishop of Paterson