



**RICHARD FRANK STIKA**  
**BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND FAVOR OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE**

**D E C R E E**

Whereas, the Diocese of Knoxville has been monitoring the directives, recommendations and guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Tennessee State and Local Health Departments to ensure that all diocesan parishes are responding appropriately to the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19); and

Whereas, access to divine worship and to the sacraments is of high importance for the spiritual good and the overall well-being of the faithful; and

Whereas, I have taken into account the rapid decline in infection rates, hospitalizations and deaths, our emergence from the winter flu season, and the now widespread availability of vaccinations, in particular those in vulnerable demographic categories; and

Through this revised decree, **effective the weekend of June 5-6, 2021, Solemnity of Corpus Christi**, I hereby present the following summary: {Note - our pastors may contact my office and seek my permission to slightly amend these directives/procedures based upon their church seating capacity and other unique, site-specific challenges}:

1. All directives (procedures) mentioned in the REVISED Decree 03-25-2021 (Public Mass and Gathering Directives) remain in place **with the exception** of:
  - A. Holy water fonts may now be filled and utilized. Hymnals, Daily Missals and other items may now be placed in the pew book holders. The aforementioned books do not require sanitizing or cleaning after each Mass. The use of holy water and hymnals/missals will be at the discretion of each parishioner. The cleaning of pews after each Mass is no longer required.
  - B. This decree supersedes the Decree (Sacraments and Funerals Directives) dated last year, May 14, 2020. Therefore, standard (normal) Pre-COVID pandemic procedures regarding the reception of sacraments and the celebration of funerals are restored (i.e., – no longer need to use a cotton ball (swabs) for anointing, etc.) Note: The REVISED Decree 03-25-2021 (Public Mass and Gathering Directives) still applies with regard to 3-foot social distancing, etc.

Given at the Chancery this 1<sup>st</sup> day of June in the Year of Our Lord 2021.



Most Reverend Richard F. Stika  
Bishop of Knoxville

Deacon Sean K. Smith  
Chancellor