



ARCHDIOCESE OF AGANA

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NEWS RELEASE

Archdiocese to temporarily celebrate Masses in parking lots, and via live streaming during PCOR 1

Archbishop Michael Byrnes, consulting with the Archdiocesan Liturgical Commission announces that Masses will not be completely halted during Pandemic Condition of Readiness (PCOR) 1. Priests will temporarily celebrate Masses at the different Catholic churches throughout the island in parking lots and via live streaming starting this Sunday, August 16.

(Please visit the Internet sites of your parish or access archagana.org for an updated schedule of Masses by early tonight. Please allow parishes time to update and compile their information).

Archbishop Byrnes is off-island on extended leave recuperating from surgery but is keeping apprised of the situation here at home.

The archbishop assures everyone of his continued prayers for our island. “The celebration of the Mass is the most essential endeavor known to the human race,” the archbishop emphasized in a brief message to his brother clergymen this morning, thanking them for their steadfastness.

Governor Lou Leon Guerrero announced Friday that she is placing the island on Pandemic Condition of Readiness (PCOR) 1 as of 12:01 a.m. Sunday. With much sadness, our Archdiocese will abide with the Executive Order. We care about the health and safety of Catholics and all people in the community.

Archdiocesan officials spoke directly and respectfully with Governor Leon Guerrero today and communicated, among other things, the Church’s absolute need to continue celebrating Mass at our parishes, at the very least, in parking lots using speaker systems and Internet live streaming.

The celebration of the Holy Eucharist is not a form of entertainment. It is not a type of social activity nor a pastime. Gathering in Communion with Jesus Christ, the author of all life, is essential to the life and soul of the Catholic Church and its people, who together comprise the Church.

(Continued on next Page)

(Archdiocese Masses, Page 2)

The celebration of the Holy Eucharist is vital to the life and soul of the Church. It is essential to all Catholics because it nourishes and sustains us. Most importantly, beyond our earthly bodies, partaking in the celebration of Holy Mass is essential to sanctifying our souls so that we be united with God in his Kingdom of Heaven for all eternity. The Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life." – Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1324.

Priests, staff and volunteers of each of our 26 parishes have stringently followed all protocols and procedures that ensure the safety of all Mass attendees and the celebrants at all of our live Masses these past many weeks. They will continue to do so now, during parking lot and live stream Masses. We earnestly pray that the PCOR 1 restrictions will be but for a short time.

All Catholics are reminded that if you are feeling ill or have pre-existing conditions that may put you at a greater risk to contract COVID-19 or other illnesses, please stay home. This is for your protection and that of others near you. The dispensation granted by Archbishop Byrnes excusing the faithful from Mass obligations still stands during this difficult time of a public health emergency.

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