



Diocese of Monterey

+Most Reverend Daniel E. Garcia

Office of the Bishop

bishop@dioceseofmonterey.org
(831) 373-4345

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Easter blessings to you and your families! The Easter season is a season of hope grounded in the resurrection of our Lord. The limitations we faced on Easter Sunday due to the pandemic, do not change in any way Christ's victory over death, and the promise that this brings to each of us. At the same time, I am keenly aware of the hunger that all our faithful are experiencing of not being able to gather and pray as a community. But we remain hopeful that restrictions will be gradually lifted in the near future.

When health restrictions are eased and we are able to start gathering together again, it is important for all of us to understand that *things probably won't immediately go back to the way they used to be.*

Diocesan guidelines for our parish and diocesan activities will continue to be responsive to what health experts and government officials indicate. These guidelines will also be responsive to the collective wisdom of representatives from our Presbyterate, California Catholic Conference and Bishops of California.

We are also very mindful of the collective yearning to return to "normalcy" in our sacramental and parish life, while we are also committed to doing so in a prudent and charitable way, mindful for the well-being of all, especially the most vulnerable.

Specifics of when public Mass and other sacraments will resume and how they will be celebrated is being presently examined. We will be communicating these changes in more detail to you, as time approaches, but you can anticipate that:

- Attendance may be limited at any given Mass or Service.
- A general dispensation from the Sunday obligation may probably continue for all (but especially for those in the most vulnerable groups, as in the elderly, compromised immune systems, etc).
- Social distancing and the use of face covers will probably be necessary.
- Liturgical changes will probably continue (e.g. omission of Holy Communion from the Chalice, only Holy Communion to be offered on the hand).
- These changes will continue to evolve over time.

We will keep you informed: please know we are sincerely thankful for your patience and understanding as we prepare for this next phase. The well-being of you and your families continue to be our top priority. You remain in my prayers.

Your brother in Christ,

+Most Reverend Daniel E. Garcia
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