



DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO

News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Diocese of Kalamazoo Readies to Welcome Back Parishioners to the Public Celebration of the Mass beginning May 27, 2020

KALAMAZOO, Mich. (May 14, 2020) – The Diocese of Kalamazoo announced plans to resume the public celebration of the Holy Mass at its parishes, beginning May 27, 2020, and in anticipation of the Feast of Pentecost on Sunday, May 31, 2020. It has been close to two months since March 20, 2020, when Bishop Paul J. Bradley suspended the public celebration, due to the serious health concerns surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bishop Bradley has conducted a series of meetings with all members of the clergy, as well as Diocesan Staff, to develop a comprehensive re-opening plan. Components of this plan call for parishes to determine proper capacity of church facilities (not to exceed 25 percent) that will fit within the safety and civil guidelines and implement safety and hygiene protocols. Within this plan, the Bishop also is asking each pastor to convene a “Parish Preparation Team”, to assist in the preparation and planning to welcome back fellow parishioners. Final guidelines for the Catholic Faithful, as well as further liturgical instructions for the clergy, are currently being finalized and will be released in the next few days.

“We plan to do everything we can to ensure the safety of God’s people and thorough preparedness is necessary,” said Bishop Paul J. Bradley. “We look forward to celebrating Pentecost with a renewed joy and hope for the future even though the number of people able to participate during our Level 1 return will be reduced due to our adherence to social distancing guidelines.”

Since March 20th, parishes throughout the nine counties of the Diocese of Kalamazoo have adopted new ways of outreach. Many are offering live-streaming of the Holy Mass, as well as updates, daily prayers, and reflections from the parish priests. Currently, there are close to 30 live-streamed Masses available on Sundays, offered in four different languages (English, Spanish, Latin, and Burmese).

“It is important to note that, during this challenging time of dealing with all the significant impacts of the pandemic, the ministries of the Church and outreach to those in need have continued,” added Bishop Bradley. “Most of our churches and Eucharistic Chapels have remained open and available for our people to come for personal prayer. Several parishes have hosted blood drives, and maintained their outreach to the poor. Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Kalamazoo initiated a major, Diocesan-wide Emergency Food Program (www.ccdok.org), with staff and hundreds of volunteers from across the Diocese, working overtime to provide essential services — including food, clothing and other necessities — to people in need throughout Southwest Michigan. I am profoundly grateful for these visible signs of God’s work at hand in our Diocese.”

For updates and current information, please visit www.diokzoo.org.

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The Catholic Diocese of Kalamazoo is the territory of Catholic churches and community led by Bishop Paul J. Bradley. The diocese was founded in 1971 when the Second Vatican Council called for the creation of smaller dioceses so that bishops could be more available to the people they serve. Today the mission diocese encompasses 5,337 square miles of nine counties in southwest Michigan: Allegan, Barry, Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph and Branch and includes 59 parishes as well as 21 Catholic schools. www.diokzoo.org.