



Brothers and Sisters,

It brings me great joy to share some good news with you about the most recent update to our counties' tier status in regard to places of worship. On the second page of this document you will find the status of each county within our diocese. As we start to re-open in some counties, I want to remind you to care for one another by maintaining at least a six-foot distance between those of different households and staying home if you are feeling sick. It is a great blessing to be able to celebrate Mass indoors as a community again. If you and your family are not at risk or vulnerable to the virus, I encourage you to take advantage of this blessing and attend Mass in person. It is recommended to those who are at risk and vulnerable to the virus to participate in the Mass by way of live streaming. With regard to outdoor Masses, they are still encouraged to continue as they allow for greater attendance. Please be mindful of the following:

- Masses and Sacramental Celebrations held outdoors, are not limited to 100 people.
- Outdoor Masses and Sacramental Celebrations allow for singing.
- There is objectively a lower risk to spreading COVID-19 when outdoors.
- Your fellow parishioners may feel more comfortable attending outdoor services.

Please be sure to contact your parish office to find out more details about how your parish is proceeding with Masses.

I, as Bishop, have heard from several members of the faithful that the diocese's liturgical guidelines for the pandemic are not always being followed. Below are the reminders that have been shared with the clergy in regard to the distribution of Holy Communion:

- As stated in my guidelines, it is *strongly recommended* that the faithful receive Communion in the hand. Although, this does not preclude their ability to receive on the tongue. No one is to be denied Communion if they prefer to receive on the tongue.
- The Communion line is not the place or time to chastise a person who desires to receive the Eucharist on the tongue.
- If a minister makes contact with a person's mouth, they will sanitize their hands before continuing to distribute communion.
- To help avoid contact when one desires to receive communion on the tongue a communicant should extend their tongue in order to receive.

On the effectiveness of the precautions taken in Catholic Masses, see this article from last month by some of the physicians involved in the Thomistic Institute guidelines:

https://www.realclearscience.com/articles/2020/08/19/evidence-based_guidelines_to_celebrate_mass_safely_are_working.html



State Guidelines

To check current county status or for further information please visit:

<https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/>

Tier Status – Places of Worship (counties may implement more restrictive measures)

Purple – Outdoor only

Red – Indoor with 25% capacity or 100, whichever is less

Orange – Indoor with 50% capacity or 200, whichever is less

Yellow – Indoor with 50% capacity

Current county status (as of 9/29/20)

To check current status visit: <https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/>

Calaveras – **Orange**

St. Andrew, San Andreas and associated missions

St. Patrick, Angels Camp and associated missions

Mono – **Orange**

St. Joseph, Mammoth Lakes and associated missions

San Joaquin - **Red**

Cathedral of the Annunciation, Stockton

Church of the Presentation, Stockton Holy

Cross, Linden

Good Shepherd Mission, French Camp Mater

Ecclesiae Mission, Thornton

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Lathrop

St. Anne, Lodi

St. Anthony, Manteca

St. Bernadette, Stockton

St. Bernard, Tracy

St. Edward, Stockton

St. George, Stockton

St. Gertrude, Stockton

St. Joachim, Lockeford

St. Linus, Stockton

St. Luke, Stockton

St. Mary of the Assumption, Stockton

St. Michael, Stockton

St. Patrick, Ripon

Stanislaus – **Purple**

All Saints, Turlock

Holy Family, Modesto

Immaculate Heart of Mary Mission, Crows Landing

Our Lady of Fatima, Modesto



Our Lady of San Juan de los Lagos Mission, Salida
Our Lady of the Assumption, Turlock
Sacred Heart, Patterson
Sacred Heart, Turlock
St. Anthony, Hughson
St. Frances of Rome, Riverbank
St. Joachim, Newman
St. Joseph, Modesto
St. Jude, Ceres
St. Louis Mission, La Grange
St. Mary of the Annunciation, Oakdale
St. Stanislaus, Modesto

Tuolumne – Orange

All Saints, Twain Harte
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Mission, Big Oak Flat
St. Joseph Mission, Tuolumne
St. Patrick, Sonora

Once again, many thanks for your attention in this matter as we anticipate re-entering our churches for worship and the celebration of the Sacraments.

In the Peace of Christ,

Bishop Myron J. Cotta