



**Diocese of Joliet**  
**Coronavirus Update**

**June 1, 2020**

**Re-opening Churches**

Dear Priests, Deacons, Parish Administrators/Business Managers,

1. Thank you for all that you are doing to re-open your Churches
2. The Churches need to be opened only when you are ready. Not necessarily on June 6-7, 2020.
  - Before opening, the parish needs to have the certification to open from the Diocese of Joliet. This is required because of risk/liability issues for both the Parish and diocese.
  - Certification should be obtained first for Church Masses and then parking lot Masses or both can be done simultaneously.
3. Common Issues:
  - Availability of supplies/equipment. The diocese is trying to manage two difficulties: shortages and price gouging. Please be in contact with Neil Harris at [nharris@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:nharris@dioceseofjoliet.org) or by phone at 815-221-6179, for information and purchasing of these items.
  - Shortage of volunteers because previous volunteers have been older and not eligible in light of COVID -19. This may require networking and personal invitation to recruit the necessary number of volunteers. It may be a blessing in disguise as it will build the volunteer/minister pool to a younger base for the parishes.
  - Importance of incorporating reverence and retaining integral Order of Eucharistic celebration.

Please remind your parishioners again that the dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Saturday/Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation is extended indefinitely.

Those parishes who have been live-streaming Masses or using other forms of technology are strongly encouraged to continue doing so. Such communications have been highly valued especially by those most vulnerable to the virus.

For ongoing directions, please contact:

Chris Nye                    [cnye@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:cnye@dioceseofjoliet.org)                    815-221-6194  
Alex Rechenmacher      [arechenmacher@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:arechenmacher@dioceseofjoliet.org)      815-221-6180

You are also welcome to contact me.

We are operating in uncharted waters. Navigating can prove challenging. Please know of my support, encouragement, and prayer for you at this time.

Muchas Gracias,

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Most Reverend Richard E. Pates  
Apostolic Administrator  
Diocese of Joliet