



DIOCESE *of* GAYLORD

OFFICE *of the* BISHOP

DATE: March 10, 2021
TO: Priests, Directors of Parish Life (Pastoral Administrators), Deacons
FROM: Most Reverend Walter A. Hurley *+ Walter C. Hurley*
RE: **Updates**

You will soon be receiving some updated material from our Worship Office regarding the liturgy as we continue in these challenging but hope-filled times. As we come to know more about the virus and our safety precautions, as well as welcome people back to in-person worship, we are trying to keep all up-to-date on expectations as we work to open things up in a safe way.

I am also grateful for those who posted in their parish bulletins and on their website my letter, "Come Home to Hope," as we seek to invite and welcome people back to church. I am most grateful to those who have carefully observed the requested (and sometimes changing) protocols in the midst of this pandemic to ensure that our churches are safe for our people. There are several new updates I want to highlight:

- Masks, social distancing and the availability and use of hand sanitizers continue to be required in all parishes in the diocese.
- If you have not been using Mass servers (as some have not during the pandemic), it is time to bring them back using proper social distancing, masks, etc. as appropriate. The presence of well-trained Mass servers enhances our celebration of the liturgy. As you know, this ministry is and should be open to young women as well as young men in all our parishes.
- While still retaining the use of masks, people can now be invited to sing the Gloria, the Entrance and Recessional hymn, in addition to the proper parts of the Mass. Music is an important part of our worship even more so in Holy Week and Easter.
- For the time being, please continue to refrain from having hymnals available. Instead, use disposable worship aids to assist with singing and/or consider selecting music that would be familiar to your parishioners.
- Because of the minimal contagion on the surfaces of furniture, disinfecting between celebrations of the Mass is no longer necessary. Those who may wish to do so can certainly bring their own disinfectant wipes. Good cleaning daily after Mass continues to be required at all times. The misting of churches that is practiced by some few parishes is not a diocesan requirement.

We must continue to keep our churches safe, and at the same time, gradually return to good liturgical practices.

I trust these comments and adjustments to our protocols will be useful to you and serve our people.

+WAH