



Diocese of Kamloops
BISHOP'S OFFICE

March 14, 2022

Dear Faithful of Kamloops Diocese,

The Holy Eucharist is the very heart and foundation of our Catholic faith. It becomes an absolute necessity for the Church and the individual Catholic. It is during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass that the saving death and resurrection of Jesus is made present to us, our covenant with Our Lord is renewed, and God, in the person of Jesus Christ, comes to us and makes himself truly present for us in his Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. It is an irreplaceable gift; a foretaste of Heaven itself.

When the pandemic began, the Public Health Officer suspended all public Liturgies. Even when smaller Masses with a limited congregation were permitted, I continued the dispensation from the Sunday obligation. During the difficult and challenging time of the pandemic, our Clergy, Religious and parishes have adapted to this situation in order to ensure the health and well-being of parishioners. I offer my sincere gratitude for the efforts that were undertaken to implement and maintain the precautionary measures that kept our parishes and schools safe.

I would like to thank the clergy for using all available means to reach out to their parishioners. With their dedication, teaching is being offered, pastoral care is being given, communities are being served and hope maintained. I am also very grateful to parishioners who are faithfully participating in the celebrations of the Mass, either in person or live-streamed and making great efforts to stay connected with the Church and sustaining their spiritual lives, despite the limitations and difficulties we are facing. While live-streamed Masses over the Internet during the past years helped Catholics nourish their spiritual life, when they could not be present for Mass, this practice cannot become the norm. The Son of God did not come to us virtually. He came to us and continues to come to us in the flesh.

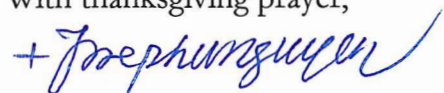
In recognition of the essential and central nature of the Eucharist Sacrifice in our lives as Catholics, and in acknowledgement of my duty as shepherd to care for the souls of everyone within our diocese, it is with joy that I hereby restore the Sunday and Holy Days of obligation in our diocese, starting Saturday, April 9th, 2022. This obligation is not a burden, for it brings life to our spirit and strengthens our relationship with Jesus Christ. As Catholics, direct contact with the Real Presence of the Body and Blood of Our Lord in offering the redeeming Sacrifice is irreplaceable.

As has always been the case, anyone with a “serious reason” or “grave cause” is excused from this obligation. In the case of the coronavirus pandemic, such reasons include:

- anyone who is sick, symptomatic, or has been recently exposed to the coronavirus;
- anyone with significant health risk factors that requires them to avoid public spaces; anyone who cares for someone with significant risk factors;
- anyone who cannot attend Mass through no fault of their own because of frailty or old age.

As we are preparing for the solemnity of Easter Triduum, which calls us to give witness to the good news of the Lord’s victory over suffering and death, may the return to the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist deepen our devotion and reclaim Sunday as a day of worship and time for community and family.

With thanksgiving prayer,



✠ Joseph Phuong Nguyen

Bishop of Kamloops