

MOST REVEREND
LOUIS F. KIHNEMAN, III
BISHOP OF BILOXI



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To the Clergy, Religious, and Lay Faithful of the Diocese of Biloxi:

Based upon phone calls to the Pastoral Center, I take this opportunity to remind Clergy and the lay faithful of the Diocese's "further updates" to our COVID-19 response, some of which are slightly revised as a result of new developments.

- Masks are recommended for vulnerable and those not vaccinated.
- Pastors should make a reasonable attempt to provide seating that can be socially distanced three feet, especially if requested.
- **Hand sanitizer** should be provided for everyone entering a parish building.
- When distributing Holy Communion, Ministers should continue to wear masks that cover the mouth and nose and sanitize their hands before distribution.
- Priest celebrants are to remind those who wish to receive Holy Communion **on the tongue** to come at the **end** of the Communion line, and the Minister of Holy Communion is to **use hand sanitizer** after each person who does so.
- Holy water fonts/stoups, if used, should be cleaned daily.
- Worship aids and hymnals can be returned to pews.
- If choir members are closely seated, they should wear masks.
- For the collection, members of the congregation may pass baskets among themselves. At the Pastor's discretion, baskets with handles are to be used.
- The Sign of Peace may be shared as individuals prefer.
- Congregational reception of the Precious Blood continues to be suspended for the time being.
- Bulletins may be distributed.
- Pews may need to be routinely sanitized between every Mass.
- Parish celebrations, events, and activities may resume at Pastor's discretion.

On a case-by-case basis, parishioners who are particularly concerned about their own or a family member's vulnerability may approach their Pastor for a one-week dispensation, renewable as the Pastor determines appropriate. As a rule, those physically unable to come to Mass, those whose health would be endangered by their presence at Mass, or those caring for someone whose health would be endangered, are not bound to physically participate in Mass.

A Pastor may temporarily return to some of the previous COVID-19 cautionary provisions if the virus or a variant changes the situation on the ground.

I again highly encourage the faithful who are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

Please be assured of my prayers.

Given at the Pastoral Center of the Diocese of Biloxi on August 6, A.D. 2021.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Louis Kihneman".

Most Reverend Louis F. Kihneman
Bishop of Biloxi