



DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

2110 Broadway • Sacramento, California 95818 • 916/733-0200 • Fax 916/733-0215

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

March 11, 2020

Dear Brothers:

Upon the advice of health officers from local counties to cancel “all non-essential large indoor gatherings” through the month of March, I am postponing the following events:

- *Come to the Table* Convocation in Davis this Saturday 3-14-20
- Parish Stewardship Conference at the Pastoral Center on 3-18-20
- All Confirmations scheduled from 3-16-20 through 3-31-20 in the parishes located in Solano, Yolo, Sacramento, and Placer counties. The Bishop’s office will work with pastors of affected parishes to promptly reschedule Confirmations

I direct that all pastors in Solano, Yolo, Sacramento, and Placer counties to take the following additional measures through the month of March:

- Cancel all communal Lenten Penance Services during the month of March. Consider offering additional times during the week for individual confessions
- Suspend group baptisms and consider individual baptisms.
- Remove the holy water from the small fonts by church doors and/or large baptismal fonts
- Cancel any large indoor gathering that is not essential (crab feeds, pancake breakfasts, fundraising events, potluck dinners, soup suppers, etc).
- Any assemblies in parochial schools and religious education programs are suspended through the month of March.
- School Masses will be suspended through the month of March.

For pastors in parishes not located in Solano, Yolo, Sacramento, and Placer counties, the above measures are recommended.

In an effort to protect those most vulnerable to the COVID-19 virus, I am issuing a decree dispensing those 60 years of age and older and those with chronic medical issues from the obligation of Sunday Mass. This will remain active until further notice.

Those who are sick or demonstrating symptoms are reminded that they are already dispensed from the Sunday obligation.

These public health measures augment the steps already implemented:

- The distribution of the chalice is suspended until further notice.
- The exchange of the sign of peace is suspended until further notice.
- Reception of communion in the hand is encouraged.
- All ministers serving at the altar should wash their hands frequently. Hand sanitizer should be readily available in the sanctuary for use by the ministers.

A public page on the diocesan website will be available by the end of the day today with links to all pertinent information regarding our response to the outbreak of the Coronavirus www.scd.org/coronavirus . The Catholic School Department will offer updates to directives on a daily basis via the website and email with school principals. We will continue to post information as it becomes available.

My staff will continue to work closely with county Health Officers as more information becomes available.

Be assured of my fraternal regard and prayers.

Respectfully,



+Jaime Soto
Bishop of Sacramento