



DIOCESE OF TUCSON – LATEST DIRECTIVES FROM BISHOP WEISENBURGER

March 16, 2020

Having taken into account recently issued directives from the **CDC** (Center for Disease Control), as well as recommendations from our Governor and others, and in accord with the role afforded me by Roman Catholic canon law, I hereby issue the following directives. These directives are motivated by an abundance of care and concern for our people as well as the greater community, and are substantially consistent with the directives of the Diocese of Phoenix and the Diocese of Gallup—all of which have Catholic parishes in the State of Arizona. Please note that the issue of Catholic school operations has been addressed separately. A formal statement addressing school issues is on our Diocese of Tucson web site, found in the Coronavirus section.

As of Monday, 3/16/2020, all parish-based public gatherings are either cancelled or suspended. These directives are in place for the next three weeks, until April 6, 2020, at which time they will be reviewed and either brought to a close or extended. This effectively puts us a **“Level 3”** in our response to the Coronavirus challenge and includes, but is not limited to:

- No public Masses after today (3/16/2020)
- The Sunday Mass obligation is dispensed for all Catholic people residing in or visiting the territory of the Diocese of Tucson. Catholics are urged to observe Sunday in accord with our teachings, which may include spending additional time on Sunday in prayer, observing a Catholic Mass via television or internet, or other pious practices.
- Confirmations scheduled during this time period are suspended and will be rescheduled
- There are to be no public Church events or gatherings, such as parish religious education programs, Stations of the Cross, Communion services, Quinceaneras, parish missions, dinners, etc.
- Mass of the Holy Oils, “Chrism Mass,” will be celebrated privately with Holy Oils to be distributed privately to priests
- Wedding should be restricted to 10 persons, and if Mass is celebrated only the bride and groom, if Catholic, are to receive Holy Communion
- Funeral Masses should be restricted to 10 persons, and the congregation should not receive Holy Communion

I believe these directives, while a hardship and deeply regrettable for us all, are sensible, substantially consistent with directives for the other Catholic diocese in Arizona, and in line with the spirit of public health directives.

+Edward J. Weisenburger
Bishop of Tucson
3/16/2020