

# NEWS



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Rev. Monsignor John A. Zuraw, Chancellor

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**FOR RELEASE:** Immediate **DATE SENT** May 8, 2020

**SUBJECT** Resumption of Public Masses

**More Information:** Monsignor John A. Zuraw, Chancellor

As the “Responsible Restart Ohio Plan” is implemented during the ongoing COVID19 pandemic allowing a gradual return to work and lifting of some of the restrictions regarding consumer, retail and services, returning to operation, the Catholic Bishops of the State of Ohio announce directives for the safe return to the public celebration of the Mass.

While making every effort to respect the spirit of the governor’s instruction, the bishops of the State of Ohio want to begin in some way to make the public celebration of the Mass available. To that end, the bishops of Ohio have agreed that each diocese will determine a soft opening date later in May granting permission for the public celebration of daily Mass where it can be achieved safely and where pastorally possible with less than 50% occupancy of the Church building, respecting social distancing. This plan provides for the possibility of the gradual return to the public celebration of Mass on the weekend of May 30/31. For the Diocese of Youngstown, the public celebration of daily Mass may resume on Monday, May 25. Please check your local parish for additional information.

Next week detailed directives and guidelines for the Diocese of Youngstown will be sent to all parishes which will include maintaining social distancing, recommendations to provide a safe environment and instructions for the distribution of Holy Communion.

Please note that the dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass still remains in effect. Bishop George V. Murry, S.J., once again, dispense the Catholic faithful who reside in the Diocese of Youngstown and all other Catholics currently in the diocese from the obligation of attending Sunday Mass until further notice. As your bishop,” I continue to be cautious and concerned for those who are most at risk, the elderly and those with serious health issues. I strongly urge those who are most vulnerable to stay at home and I implore those who are not feeling well to refrain from coming to church”. Bishop Murry thanks the faithful for their patience, understanding and cooperation as we implement this gradual return to the public celebration of Mass.

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