



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

March 17, 2020

Dear Brothers in Christ:

It is with a heavy and prayerful heart that I write to you today. I have determined the need to suspend all public Masses in the Diocese of Boise from March 21-22 through Palm Sunday, April 5. I am extending a dispensation to all the faithful of the Diocese from the Sunday obligation to participate in the Mass. I may be required to extend this suspension even further should circumstances warrant that need.

I arrived at this very difficult decision after consulting with our priests and observing what neighboring dioceses are doing, including our Metropolitan Archbishop, Alexander Sample for the Archdiocese of Portland. I have also been paying close attention to the recommendations from state and federal governments regarding public gatherings while we are in the midst of this COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

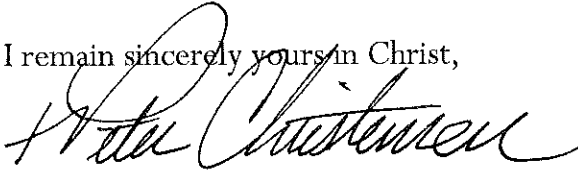
This has not an easy decision. I make it out of great concern for the health and well-being of our faithful in our Diocese, especially those who are most at risk from the virus, including those with chronic health conditions and those over the age of 60. Such individuals include not only many of our parishioners, but also a good number of our priests.

I encourage the faithful to follow along with a Sunday Mass live-streamed from a location that will soon be linked to our website at catholicidaho.org. I encourage setting aside time to pray as a family—perhaps praying the Rosary with an intention for our sick and vulnerable, as well as our health care providers in the midst of this crisis.

While following along a live-stream or telecast of Sunday Mass, you can make the following Spiritual Communion:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

As I remain sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Peter Christensen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Most Rev. Peter F. Christensen
Bishop of Boise

Prayer for This Day and Time

Written by Bishop Peter March 17, 2020

Lord, I do not know where these days, these times are heading, but I do trust that you are the One who always leads to the fullness of life. Therefore, I ask that your presence be ever more apparent, so that understanding your care for me, I may also know of your deep and abiding love for all others.

O Lord, I will do my best to surrender to your loving Providence at this time, in order that I may be obedient in doing whatever it is that you ask of me; for I desire to entrust my life more fully to you, as in response I offer myself more fully to the care of all my brothers and sisters.

Please, Lord Jesus Christ, may your Blessings be upon our World, our Nation and my Neighbors, as by your grace and goodness shown to each one of us we may desire together to follow your lead to wherever you head this new day of our lives.

Amen