



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bishop David L. Ricken announces Holy Communion Services to begin Pentecost weekend

GREEN BAY, Wis. (May 15, 2020) – Bishop David L. Ricken is pleased to announce beginning Pentecost weekend, May 30-31, 2020, parishes throughout the diocese will begin offering Holy Communion Services with distribution of the Blessed Sacrament.

“I understand the desire of the faithful to receive Christ in the Eucharist and there is precedent for doing so in extraordinary, emergency situations like we are facing right now, even outside the Mass. And this is the route we are taking at this time,” said Bishop Ricken.

The solution the Catholic Church provides, and the Diocese of Green Bay will implement in the short term, is a simple Communion Service. Parishioners who are able are strongly encouraged to participate spiritually at Mass by means of television, online streaming, or radio before coming to a parish Communion Service. The service will include reading briefly from the Word of God, praying the Lord’s Prayer together, and receiving the Eucharist. Communion Services are never an alternative to the celebration of the Mass and must only be used for serious reasons. Living in this time of a global pandemic, which has led to thousands of deaths in our country, is a serious reason.

The Diocese of Green Bay’s plan differs from that of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee in that it does not include a return to Mass at this time. Rather it takes into account the particular circumstances of this diocese. “Because of our concern for those living in the northern counties of the diocese, who are not projected to see spikes in the virus until perhaps mid-July, we will remain vigilant in our observance of the Bounce Back Plan and our monitoring and measuring of data,” said Bishop Ricken. “The principles we will adhere to include following the data and not getting ahead of the process. We will stay the course, following the gating criteria as the health experts have shown at the Federal, State, even County level.”

Catholics in the diocese are called at this time to find balance between bold faith and prudent safety. We understand the need of the faithful for communion and community, and this plan addresses those realities. It is also important to remember, no Catholic is required to attend Mass and receive Holy Communion during the pandemic. The permission to do so in the plan is for those who desire to receive Holy Communion and can safely do so.

You can find the document “*The Distribution of the Holy Communion Outside of Mass on Sundays during the Coronavirus Pandemic*” online at www.gbdioc.org/covid19. We ask for continued prayers for our diocese, state and nation as we continue to make wise decisions to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of all people.

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Who we are: As friends and followers of Jesus, the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay is devoted to fostering households and communities of discipleship through the mission and ministry of the Catholic Church. We are missionary disciples striving to lead all people to the Kingdom of God. Established in 1868, the diocese is composed of 324,000 Catholics in 16 counties: Brown, Calumet, Door, Florence,

Forest, Kewaunee, Langlade, Manitowoc, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago.

Contact: Justine Lodi, director of communications, at 920-272-8213 or jlodi@gbdioc.org; or Sarah Gietman, communications coordinator, at 920-272-8209 or sgietman@gbdioc.org.