



Directives Concerning COVID-19 and Non-Essential Gathering in the Church

Restrictions on Non-Essential Gatherings for 50 or more:

Per CDC guidelines, we are recommending the suspension of all non-essential gatherings for 50 people (federal government is recommending 10 people) or more indefinitely, to be reviewed mid-April. All non-essential events below the 50-person threshold should be suspended at the discretion of the pastor/pastoral leader. Per the CDC Guidance released on March 15th, "events of any size should only be continued if they can be carried out with adherence to guidelines for protecting vulnerable populations, hand hygiene, and social distancing."

Suspended Gatherings include, but are not limited to:

- Fish Fries
- Bingo
- Prayer Group Gatherings
- Alpha/Small Groups
- Parish Missions
- Youth Ministries
- Parish Retreats (TEC, Cursillo, CHRP, Koinonia)
- Communal Adoration/Holy Hours
- Support Groups (Grief Groups, 12-Step Groups, etc.)
- Stations of the Cross

In time of social distancing, use creativity and remote alternatives to meet personal needs via online and virtual resources. When feasible, organizers could modify events to be virtual. Parishes may wish to consider hosting regular or occasional opportunities for formation, prayer, and social connection via such channels as Facebook Live, Zoom, GoToMeeting, Google Hangout, Facetime, Skype, etc.

Parishes may also wish to consider outreaches such as letter-writing campaigns, notes/card distribution, phone check-ins, etc.

In all things, we encourage parishes and parish leaders to err on the side of charity and love.

Further policy changes may be made as CDC guidelines are updated. Current guidelines may be found at the following link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/mass-gatherings-ready-for-covid-19.html>.

If you have questions, please contact Julianne Stanz, Director of Parish Life and Evangelization, at 920-272-8270, jstanz@gbdioc.org.