



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Bishop David L. Ricken reinstates dispensation from obligation to attend Sunday Mass in wake of rising COVID cases throughout the diocese**

GREEN BAY, Wis. (Oct. 5, 2020) – Bishop David L. Ricken of the Diocese of Green Bay announced today he is reinstating the dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass due to concerns about the continued escalation in the spread of the COVID-19 virus. This dispensation takes effect immediately and will remain in effect until further notice. This is NOT a closure of public Masses on Sundays or weekdays. We will continue to celebrate the Mass publically every Sunday at all of our parishes for those who are able to attend and willing to strictly follow the proper health protocols including social distancing of 6 ft., hand sanitizing, mandatory masks and building disinfection protocols following each Mass.

“In the past few weeks the number of cases has increased fourfold, with some areas of our diocese being counted among the worst outbreaks in the country,” said Bishop Ricken. “I grant this dispensation to help in preventing the community spread of this disease. I have further done this for those who might be unable to come to Mass because of significant health concerns as well as for those who have been burdened in conscience. After the current high numbers of infection have subsided and stabilized, we will return to the Sunday obligation requirements. Even though the dispensation is once again granted, it has now become very obvious that establishing a fixed date for a return is not prudent.”

Bishop will continue to celebrate Mass each Sunday, broadcast over the local CBS affiliate, WFRV Local 5 at 10 a.m. Sunday Mass is available diocesan-wide via broadcast television on WBAY at 5:30 a.m. and again on the CW at 8 a.m.. Sunday morning, on Relevant Radio, 1050 AM at 9 a.m., and through livestream from St. Francis Xavier Cathedral in Green Bay at the following link: <https://sfxcathedralgb.com>. Parishes throughout the diocese are also livestreaming Mass. Check your parish website for details.

Daily Mass is livestreamed Monday through Friday from the campus of Relevant Radio here in Green Bay. You can access the Mass at the Relevant Radio app, or at this link <https://relevantradio.com/faith/daily-mass-video/>. Also check your local parish for daily mass offerings.

Those Catholics who chose not to attend Mass because of this dispensation are urged to remain home and pray fervently for healing, hope, and peace for all those affected by this illness.

The obligation to attend Mass for Catholics reflects our faith in Jesus Christ, the blessing of the Holy Eucharist and an acknowledgment of His great love for us.

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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 Lodl, director of communications, at 920-272-8213 or [jlodl@gbdioc.org](mailto:jlodl@gbdioc.org); or Sarah Gietman, communications coordinator, at 920-272-8209 or [sgietman@gbdioc.org](mailto:sgietman@gbdioc.org).