



# *Catholic Diocese of Peoria*

## Spalding Pastoral Center

419 NE Madison Avenue  
Peoria, IL 61603  
309.671.1550

May 26, 2020

Dear Brother Priests:

As we look forward to the reopening of our churches, I am happy to share the following developments. Beginning May 29, the Diocese of Peoria will enter Phase IA. Pastors may open their churches for private prayer for up to 10 people, provided that you have a cleaning routine in place for disinfecting your churches. No special certification form is required for this phase.

As we look forward to Phase II, please find attached the checklist that will be used for the resumption of public Mass in our churches. **While we do not yet have permission to enter Phase II**, this checklist will help you prepare for that time. I hope that we may be able to begin Phase II in a week or two, probably with a limit on the number of persons who can enter our church buildings (possibly 20% of total capacity).

Several parishes have begun offering drive-in Masses in which the faithful attend while remaining in their cars. This practice may continue for the foreseeable future. Beginning May 29, if the faithful can maintain physical distancing, outdoor Masses may be held where the faithful may sit outside in lawn chairs, on the ground, etc. An outdoor Mass may be preferred if it allows more people to attend than the initial limited capacity imposed for indoor Masses in Phase II.

Pastors may freely allow their deacons or lay extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion to distribute Communion. To protect his own health, a priest in the at-risk population might wish to ask a qualified minister to distribute Communion in his place.

Please wait until we have permission to enter Phase II to send in your checklist. Once this permission has been given, you may use the checklist to “self-certify” your parish church for public Mass inside your church buildings. Once you meet the criteria and send in your checklist, you will then be able to reopen for public Mass on weekdays and Sundays. A scan of the checklist, or your answers to the questions can be sent to [reopen@cdop.org](mailto:reopen@cdop.org).

Questions about our reopening process can be directed to [reopen@cdop.org](mailto:reopen@cdop.org).

Fraternally yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason Gray". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Msgr. Jason Gray