



**MOST REVEREND JOSEPH R. KOPACZ, D.D., PH.D.**  
CATHOLIC DIOCESE *of* JACKSON

May 20, 2021

Dear Disciples of the Lord,

May the Holy Spirit pour out the love of God into your lives as we look ahead to the great feast of Pentecost. In this mailing you have the latest updates in our ongoing response to the impact of the pandemic. It can be a twisting kaleidoscope for sure, replete with uncertainty, but there are tangible positive trends in our nation, state and communities. New infections are much lower, and more people have received the vaccine, and/or continue to utilize the safety protocols. Many venues have reopened and are fully engaged. In response to the current landscape we have adapted our protocols for Mass and ministries. This being said, we all know that the virus is not dead, and therefore, it remains wise to err on the side of safety and the common good. It is everyone's hope that the virus will be suppressed further, and that we will not be sidelined by a summer surge. Nonetheless, we are loosening the protocols and "taking down the ropes" as some have urged me to do months ago. I thank the leadership of our diocese who have contributed to these updates for our protocols. Of course, there is not total agreement on all of the items, but there is substantial consensus over the steps that we are taking at this time.

**The Dispensation from Sunday Mass will end on the Feast of Corpus Christ, Saturday and Sunday, June 5/6.** The Sunday obligation will be restored on this great feast when we can satisfy our hunger for the Bread of Life, in Word and Sacrament with the reception of Holy Communion. Keep in mind that the Church always dispenses from the Sunday obligation when any of the faithful are confronting serious health concerns. Therefore, someone can validly make the decision to attend Mass during the week, if able, and to participate in the Mass on the Lord's Day through live streaming.

May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads '+ Joseph R. Kopacz'. The signature is written in a cursive style and includes a small cross symbol at the beginning.

Bishop Joseph R. Kopacz  
Bishop of Jackson