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Subject: COVID-19 Updates/Clarifications

Good morning,

Bishop Vetter extends his thanks and appreciation for everyone's help and cooperation as we navigate the COVID-19 pandemic. Please remember that at this time, the dispensation of the obligation to attend Mass remains in place.

Bishop Vetter encourages each parish/pastor to establish a working relationship with your local health department.

They can be of great assistance and guidance. Follow their guidance, particularly in these areas:

- Communion to the Homebound. If allowed by local health departments, and the homebound personally request it, Communion may be brought to them.
- Communion/Mass in Care Centers — again follow local guidelines, in addition to the center's guidelines, once allowed, it can resume.
- Overnight retreats — follow local guidelines.
- Coffee/Donuts after Mass — follow local guidelines
- Funeral Luncheons — follow local guidelines
- Parish Socials — follow local guidelines.

These parts of the diocesan liturgical guidelines have not changed:

- Use of hymnals are still not allowed, unless there is adequate time between usage; more than 24 hours.
- Collections — continue to use collection points, rather than passing the basket through the congregation.
- Sign of peace is still not offered
- Holy Water is still not allowed in fonts. Consider using the Sprinkling Rite during Mass.
- Communion under both forms is still not allowed.

Important Note: With the excitement rising as more people are vaccinated, please be extremely sensitive.

The choice to receive or not receive the vaccine is a private decision subject to the provisions of HIPPA (Health Insurance Protection and Portability Act), we, as leaders, staff, faculty and volunteers in our respective parishes and schools, must respect the privacy of individuals and not inquire as to whether an employee has received or will receive the vaccine.

Easter Blessings!

Fr. Jeff Fleming

Diocese of Helena

Chancellor

Moderator of the Curia

Adjutant Judicial Vicar

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