

MOST REVEREND
LOUIS F. KIHNEMAN, III
BISHOP OF BILOXI



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Dear Sisters and Brothers in our Risen Lord,

Jesus Christ is Risen. He is Risen indeed!

As a Church, this is our Easter proclamation. It is the proclamation of our lives as Christians. He is Risen! He is our hope and our salvation. I have been praying for each of you. I have been touched by your love for the Eucharist and the Easter Sacraments and by your support of your parish and our priests. I am grateful for your patience over the past weeks. I believe the Holy Spirit has been creating within us a hunger for the Eucharist.

I write to you today with the news that we will start public Masses, *without obligation and complying with the requirements of social distancing*. Our priests have received my decree "RETURNING TO WORSHIP TOGETHER" for the opening of churches May 23, 2020.

Your pastors have been working hard to prepare our churches. I encourage you to work with your pastor in creating a safe environment for all as we come back together as a community of faith. Protecting each other from the Coronavirus remains of utmost importance, and we must keep in mind that opening the churches for the public celebration of Mass does not signal the 'end' of this contagious pandemic. Everyone's vigilance is crucial whenever we gather.

As we come back together as a community of faith, let us work in unity for the good of everyone. Bear in mind the urging of St. Paul to the Church in Philippi: "*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus...*" Philippians 2:3-5. **Let us take care of one another.**

While the Sunday obligation to participate in Mass continues to be dispensed for the faithful, it is important that we have the opportunity to come together as community and celebrate God's gift of Himself in Holy Communion. These communal moments are moments we are to gather with the Crucified and Risen Savior.

I am remembering you in my prayers and Masses I offer daily.

Sincerely yours in our Risen Lord,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Louis Kihneman".

Most Reverend Louis F. Kihneman, III
Bishop of Biloxi

"A welcoming family of GOD seeking to live faithfully, love generously, and share the good news of Jesus Christ"