



**DIOCESE OF  
SAN JOSE**

**Office of Bishop**

## **Statement by Bishop Oscar Cantú on the Supreme Court Decision Affirming the Right to Indoor Worship**

### ***UPDATED STATEMENT Dated February 9, 2021***

“Given the temporary order issued by the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California stating indoor worship could resume in Santa Clara County at a maximum of 20% of normal capacity, **parishes, missions, and chapels in the Diocese of San Jose may resume indoor worship services up to 20% capacity effective today, but only if and when each parish can safely do so.** I am grateful that places of worship now have the same capacity limits as retail shopping and personal care services in Santa Clara County.

“Nevertheless, COVID-19 still poses serious risks. All of us need to remain vigilant, wear a mask, maintain physical distance between households, and get vaccinated when we become eligible in order to protect friends, family and the vulnerable among us.

“Catholics in the Diocese of San Jose continue to be dispensed from the Sunday obligation to attend Mass in person. Yet, all the faithful are urged to keep holy the Lord’s Day by sanctifying the whole day with prayer, family fellowship, works of mercy, and either safely attending Mass in person or reverently participating in Mass through livestream.”

### ***ORIGINAL STATEMENT Dated February 6, 2021***

“I am pleased with last night’s Supreme Court Decision affirming the fundamental right to indoor worship in the United States. Catholic Churches have been worshipping indoors across our country for many months, and there has been minimal COVID transmission at their religious services due to parishes following stringent health and safety protocols pursuant to State and County guidelines.

“Each of our parishes may resume indoor religious services today at 25% of capacity, but only when each can do so safely. While we will now be able to gather for indoor religious services, it is vital to appreciate that things will not immediately “go back to normal” as the COVID-19 still poses serious risks of infection, especially for the most vulnerable. Our parishes will continue to abide by State and County public health orders following capacity and singing restrictions, mandated cleaning protocols, social distancing, and face-covering guidelines.

“As we continue to protect the most vulnerable among us, the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass is still in effect. Parishes will continue to offer outdoor and livestream Masses wherever possible for parishioners who are vulnerable to COVID-19 or hesitant about indoor worship.

“With this good news, let us move forward in hope and faith, continuing to take all necessary precautions and safeguards to protect life in our community as we resume indoor worship within our churches. Let us also continue to pray for all those suffering from the pandemic and its aftermath.”

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