



DIOCESE OF  
SAN JOSE

Office of the Bishop

September 20, 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in the Diocese of San Jose,

The pandemic this year has forced us all to re-evaluate how we live our lives. Families have had to deal with the loss of jobs, working remotely, distance learning for our children, separation from loved ones, isolation, and the list goes on. We, as Catholics, have had to change how we worship and experience our faith community.

In his September 13<sup>th</sup> homily, Archbishop Cordileone of San Francisco invited the faithful of San Francisco to participate in a Eucharistic procession on September 20<sup>th</sup> to the Cathedral to call for reopening churches for worship at a level consistent with other activities in San Francisco and with stringent health and safety protocols in place.

I support the Archbishop's call for San Francisco Catholics to prayerfully protest the County and City of San Francisco's uniquely severe limits on public worship, which until this week only allowed outdoor Masses for up to 12 people despite the fact the City of San Francisco has been in the Red Tier for three weeks. As the rest of the state, including our own County, was safely lowering the restrictions on gatherings, the County and City of San Francisco was not.

For us, the situation has been different. Our Diocese has been able to celebrate Masses with up to 60 people outdoors or with 100 cars for nearly three months with strict health and safety guidelines while our County was still on the Watch List or Purple Tier.

I continue to dialogue with key County officials about allowing indoor worship, ensuring safety and health requirements, now that our County has moved to the Red Tier within the past week. I hope we can soon return to indoor worship at a safe percentage of a church building's capacity, with all the necessary health and safety precautions. While I, like many of you, don't like the public health restrictions, they have kept us safe, reduced the COVID spread in our County, and have been reasonable in our County so far.

Yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Oscar Cantú