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Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades Will Lift Suspension of Public Liturgies May 23/24, but with Strict Safety Precautions.

After much consultation and following directives from Governor Holcomb’s “Back on Track” Roadmap to Safely Reopen Indiana, Bishop Kevin Rhoades has decided to lift the suspension on public liturgies in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend beginning on the weekend of May 23-24, the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord. At the same time, the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass will continue for all Catholics in the diocese through August 15, 2020 at which point it will be re-evaluated.

Bishop Rhoades is requiring all parishes to observe social distancing within churches and on parish property as a most effective means to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, so Mass attendance will necessarily be limited. Because churches differ in size and seating capacity, each parish pastor will decide how to handle the number of people who can attend any given liturgy according to the social distancing requirements. Congregants in attendance must also wear face masks at liturgies.

Additionally, First Holy Communion Masses can be celebrated during the weekend of May 16-17 only for First Communicants and their families, observing the above-mentioned requirements.

The bishop’s letter to parishioners and the diocesan directives can be found at: www.diocesefwsb.org/covid-19.