



Memo from the Bishop

Number 90 ✕ February 3, 2021

**PRESENT COUNTY TIER / REGION STATUS:** All counties of the Diocese remain in the most restrictive tier of Purple - Outdoor only with masks and social distancing. Only four counties of the entire State are in different tiers, one in the Red and three in the Yellow.

I am sure you receive a number of requests to 'Open up our churches' but this is not an option which I have. There is still a Supreme Court Decision pending to help clarify the matter. I hear that some denominations might be allowing indoor worship in your counties but we do not know if the County has been in contact with them about this or not. We must presume that the State and County do not approve.

In the event that the Court should rule that the right to worship (indoors) must prevail then each Parish would need to determine whether to act against the advice of County Health Officers. In the event that such a Court ruling would be in favor of Churches being allowed to hold indoor worship then we would need to be very conscientious, as we were in May and June, about indoor sanitizing efforts, proper distancing and assuring all participants utilize masks.

As I noted last week, many people stay home already out of fear and that fear would not be appeased by a favorable Court ruling. Thus, even with a Court ruling, a decision to open would (I am speculating) be done without State approval.

**WELCOME DEACON JOE OBERTING:** I am pleased to announce that Deacon Oberting has been hired by the Diocese to be our next CFO. He and Dave Adams will work together for several months in order to provide a period of training and a smooth transition. Thus, questions can be directed to either Deacon Joe or to Dave Adams during this transition period. As time goes on, Deacon Joe will absorb more of the duties with the goal that he will be fully 'on-boarded' prior to Dave's departure from this office. Again, WELCOME Deacon Joe.

**2021 ORDINATIONS:** A notice of these dates was sent out some time ago but I wanted to include these important events in the life of the Church of Santa Rosa Diocese in our Presbyteral and Deacon Bulletins so that all would be encouraged to properly mark your calendars and plan to attend or, if we are still prohibited from large gatherings, to keep these two men in prayer on these significant days.

Mr. Gabriel Sanchez is scheduled to be ordained to the Transitional Diaconate on Saturday, June 5, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. at the Cathedral.

Rev. Mr. Alan Acevedo is scheduled to be ordained to the Holy Priesthood on Friday, June 11, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Cathedral.

**SAFE ENVIRONMENT / PERSONNEL COMPLIANCE:** While we are in the midst of being shut down, the realities of needing to be vigilant about our National and Diocesan Protocols regarding safe environment and personnel training have not diminished. This applies to all Pastors, Parochial Vicars, Deacons, Retired Clergy (who substitute in Parishes or request Letters of Good Standing), Staff and others who serve or act as representatives of the Diocese. Check with Julie or Kirstin at the Chancery if you need help checking your status.

**PERSEVERE! BE SAFE!** God bless you for all your efforts for the sake of souls during these most trying times. **PRAY for better days!**