

カトリック福岡司教区
DIOCESE OF FUKUOKA

カトリック福岡司教館
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Bishop's House
6-28 Josuidori, Chuo-ku
810-0028 Fukuoka, JAPAN

Fukuoka, November 6, 2020

To all the faithful of the Diocese of Fukuoka

Dear brothers and sisters:

The peace of the Lord be with you all.

It seems that the situation of COVID-19 is, in some way, normalizing in the three provinces that comprise our diocese of Fukuoka: Fukuoka, Kumamoto and Saga. However, I insist on the need to continue to strictly comply with the norms that were published in the letter of July 30 this year.

In a month and a half, we will celebrate Christmas. It is a feast in which many non-Catholic people join us in celebrating the Eucharist. This year, due to the COVID-19 situation, we will be compelled to limit the participation. We are going to give priority to the care of life: "Avoid being infected" and "avoid infecting other people." This is the watchword when scheduling the Christmas celebration.

I ask that the norms given by the Diocese of Fukuoka for celebrations in the church be strictly observed. Furthermore, even knowing that there is always the need to adapt the norms to the circumstances of each parish or group, I ask that the following indications be kept in mind when scheduling the celebration of Christmas Mass:

1. Please advise in advance that there will be restrictions on participation in the celebration. This is especially important for those parishes that are located next to a Catholic kindergarten or school.
2. Make a careful list of those attending the celebration.
3. Make sure there is at least one meter of distance between people. Regulate entry based on this criterion. People of the same family who usually share a home, it is not necessary that they submit to this rule.
4. Elderly people or those who suffer from a chronic illness should not participate in the celebration if they feel some kind of indisposition. In any case, participation will not be limited for reasons of age.
5. Lately we have refrained from singing during celebrations. As up to now, you can accompany some moment of the celebration with the organ and even commission a soloist to perform a song,

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always maintaining a safe distance from other people. When compliance with social distance can be guaranteed, the members of the parish choir can even be asked to perform a song.

We are going to broadcast the Mass on the night of the 24th on YOU TUBE from the cathedral. Those who cannot personally participate in the celebration will be able to join the Christmas celebration through the internet.

I ask the Lord's blessing for each of you and your families. I wish you all a merry Christmas.

Fraternally in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Josep M. Abella', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Josep M. Abella
Bishop of Fukuoka