



Office of the Bishop

## DIOCESE OF LITTLE ROCK

2500 North Tyler Street • P.O. Box 7565 • Little Rock, Arkansas 72217 • (501) 664-0340 Fax (501) 664-6304

May 9, 2021

To the people of the Diocese of Little Rock,

Now that most Arkansans over the age of 16 have access to a coronavirus vaccination, I have sought the advice of the Presbyteral Council and the Diocesan Pastoral Council regarding next steps, and so today I am pleased to promulgate two things. First a further loosening of the anti-COVID 19 protocols that for over a year have prevented an outbreak of disease in any of our parishes and second, I would like to invite everyone to come to the Barton Coliseum for the ordination of 5 new priests for the Diocese of Little Rock at 10:00 am, Saturday May 29. This will be a special time to thank the Lord for bringing us through this pandemic so far and for providing us these new priests as we look to the future.

I believe that due to the universal availability of the vaccine, we can now make mask-wearing optional, effective next weekend, May 15-16. This gives vaccine-hesitant people one more week to at least get their first shot. In addition, Communion on the tongue during Mass is now allowed. I do recommend, but do not require, continued mask-wearing for those who are not yet fully vaccinated or who are otherwise especially vulnerable.

Also, I encourage all Arkansas Catholics to come to the ordinations at the Barton Coliseum on May 29. This will be an unforgettable experience! The Barton Coliseum holds 10,000 people, so there will be plenty of room for people to spread out.

Sincerely in Christ,

+Anthony B. Taylor  
Bishop of Little Rock