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Resuming Parish Gatherings

With fall quickly approaching, parishes have been inquiring whether it is appropriate to begin to resume some gatherings in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic. Bishop Peter Libasci has advised that when considering those gatherings to resume, the celebration of Mass and the Sacraments must be our highest priority. Next would be our ministries associated most closely with the spiritual life of the Parish and the care for the vulnerable. Parish social activities for parishioners may be considered if they may be conducted in such a way that mitigating the risk of COVID-19 is possible.

Bringing outside groups back to parishes is possible but will be a bit different. Before this pandemic, the representative of an outside group would sign the Diocese's Short-Term Facility Use Agreement and provide evidence of insurance (and name the Diocese, Parish, and others as additional insured). In this current pandemic, the Agreement is still required, but with insurance carriers exempting COVID-19 from coverage, the evidence of insurance provided by an outside group is limited. For this reason, and with limited exceptions for those groups whose members inherently have a privacy concern (specifically, Alcoholics Anonymous), outside groups will be required to provide a signed Participant Waiver and Release from each participant before the event in addition to the Agreement and evidence of insurance.

Two individuals in your Parish currently have access to Quadra, an application that provides access to view information about the Parish's account with the Diocesan Insurance Program. Quadra also includes links to the Diocesan Risk Management Standards, including template forms that can be downloaded, such as the Short-Term Facility Use Agreement and Participant Waiver and Release. For questions about access to Quadra, please contact RiskServicesRCBM@PorterCurtis.com or call (877) 409-5655. Note that the Quadra access restriction for two people per location has been lifted, so if there are others on your parish staff that need access, please reach out to the contact shown above.

For more information, please contact Meredith P. Cook, Chancellor, at 603-663-0148 or mcook@rcbm.org.

This information also is being provided to Deacons, Business Managers, Bookkeepers, and Parish Secretaries.