



Diocese of St. Thomas in the US Virgin Islands

29A - 30A Prindsens Gade, St. Thomas, US Virgin Islands 00802

June 4, 2021

Office of the Bishop

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Thank you for your loving participation and generosity for my Episcopal Ordination pre-projects, events and the Ordination Celebration held on Saturday, April 17, 2021. The success of these projects and celebrations would not have been possible without your yes, and full participation. I was deeply moved by your willingness to support me and the church, and your enthusiastic and joyous demonstration of love and togetherness at these events.

His Holiness Pope **Francis** continually speaks about a church that reflects the joy of the gospel, a lively faith in God. It is on this premise that I invite you to be a regular participant at our church activities. Let us not let the special moments we shared end with my Episcopal Ordination, but let it continue in the daily life of our church.

Last week, I announced that in concert with a number of Dioceses and Archdioceses in the United States mainland, we have also lifted the dispensation of the Sunday and Holy Days Mass obligation in our Territory. The faithful is invited to resume their normal attendance to the Sunday liturgies, the source and summit of our Catholic faith (Canons 1245-1247 and Catechism of the Catholic Church # 2181).

I therefore encourage you to attend our weekend mass celebrations and also to participate in our many ministries as we keep our faith alive. This can only happen with your presence. An empty church cannot come alive without the lay faithful and what better moment than now, when our doors are open, after a prolonged period of closure due to the covid pandemic. I personally invite you to come to church and witness the love and mercy of God.

I also urge you to seek immunization by getting vaccinated. As we pray to seek God's protection from Covid-19, I encourage you to continue to observe the safety protocols mandated by the CDC and the Health Department.

Please, note that the obligation to attend Mass does not apply to those who are sick, those in hospitals or nursing homes, those who have reason to believe that they have recently been exposed to the coronavirus or another serious contagious disease, and those with underlying health conditions. Whatever the case, inform your pastor. All our priests are ready to assist you spiritually and eagerly await your calls so they can visit and minister to our homebound parishioners.

I take this opportunity to welcome you back and look forward to meeting and greeting you at our church celebrations

Faithfully yours in Christ

The Most Reverend Jerome Feudjio

Diocese of Saint Thomas in the United States Virgin Islands

P.O. Box 301825 • St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00803-1825

340-774-3166 • Fax 340-774-5816