



Archbishop Cordileone Calls on California to Implement Supreme Court's Ruling, and for Safe Public Worship: "Catholics Need the Body and Blood of Christ This Christmas"

Most Rev. Salvatore J. Cordileone
December 3, 2020

Today in *Harvest Rock Church, et al. v Newsom*, the Supreme Court remanded a California District Court ruling that had permitted California's restrictions on worship to continue in order for the court to reconsider its decision in light of the SCOTUS ruling on November 25 in *Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn v. Cuomo*.

In that decision, the Supreme Court clearly ruled governments may not favor secular indoor activities, such as indoor retail, over worship. The same restrictions must, at a minimum, be applied to both.

Catholics and other responsible faith communities should not be lumped in with a few irresponsible bad actors. This is not done with anyone else, and it should not be done with people of faith. And the timing now is critical, lest Christians be deprived of celebrating the Christmas holy days in their churches, even if with limited numbers and other reasonable safety precautions. The time is overdue for our civil officials to work with us and other churches on worshipping safely. Catholics need the Body and Blood of Christ this Christmas, in California as everywhere else. And they have every right to access it.

Experience shows that when responsible actors are irresponsibly discriminated against, people tend to congregate in less regulated settings, such as private homes.

Worship is not less important than shopping for shoes; it is certainly more important to people's spiritual and psychological health; it is a natural and Constitutional right, and we Catholics have shown for months that we can worship safely—with masks, social distancing, ventilation, and sanitation.

We prefer not to go to court to win this fight. We prefer, and have been working hard for a long time to achieve, resolving this impasse with mutual understanding and respect. That would save a lot of valuable time and resources. It would also help to build up good will.

Let my people worship.

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