



## **Bishop Recommends Continuing Online Worship During June**

28 May 2020

The Right Reverend Thomas J. Brown, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Maine, in a Zoom meeting with clergy and lay leaders on Tuesday, May 26, recommended continuing online worship during the month of June.

In the meeting Brown said, “There is so much that we don’t know. The risk we take by gathering in-person not only takes a lot of energy, but it also puts us in a potential position of spreading the virus, causing illness, and potentially death.”

In addition to the potential risk associated with in-person worship, the Bishop pointed out that with all the restrictions—no singing, no exchange of the peace, no celebration of the Eucharist as we have known it, no hugging, no greeting—the experience might well be unsatisfying.

“At the end of the day we have to acknowledge that it may not be safe, that we need more time, and that we are actually gathering and worshipping online. God is being praised, we are finding connections among each other, and we’re adapting.” The Bishop also recommended continuing to explore options for worshipping God in the outdoors.

In the meeting, the Bishop continued, “You are faithful, and we’re doing this together. Today the church commemorates St. Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury. In correspondence between St. Augustine and Pope Gregory, Augustine asked the Pope for advice about what to do in the face of so much diversity of worship practices throughout Europe and England. The Pope replied by saying, ‘things should not be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things.’ Friends, it is a good thing right now for our place of worship to be online.”

The Right Reverend Thomas J. Brown