



Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough

June 10, 2020

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

With the recent announcement from the Ontario government that places of worship may once again open with 30% capacity, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough is now preparing to reopen its parishes reverently and responsibly.

To begin the reopening process, all parishes will follow this timeline:

June 12 – 13, 2020 – Period of preparation for parishes. Churches remain closed.

Sunday, June 14, 2020 – On the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, parishes will open church buildings for a period of the day for private prayer, Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confessions) and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament only. The pastor will decide whether it is feasible to open mission churches on this day. The pastor will also determine the schedule for the day and post it for the faithful.

Monday, June 15, 2020 – Churches may open for private prayer, or be closed for necessary cleaning and preparation.

Tuesday, June 16, 2020 – Priests begin to celebrate daily Mass in parishes. Masses continue through the week according to the regular schedule or an adapted schedule, as necessary.

Weekend of June 20/21, 2020 – Sunday Masses will resume.

During this period of transition, I continue to dispense the faithful from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass. Those most at risk because of advanced age or compromised health should consider not attending Mass during this time, or attending only weekday celebrations of the Mass when participants are fewer. The Sunday Mass from the Cathedral of St. Peter-in-Chains will for the time being continue to be broadcast on YourTV Peterborough and area, and the YouTube link will be made available on the website for the Diocese.

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The procedures for the celebration of Mass and the sacraments will be different from our usual experience. I ask for your understanding and patience as we welcome back our parishioners, even in limited numbers. This will be a period of transition and adjustment as we begin the reopening process. My prayer is that our gratitude for the restoration of the worship life in our parishes will inspire our openness to the changes we will each make for the common good.

I am grateful to the working group of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario that formulated guidelines for the Dioceses of our province in consultation with experts in various fields, the members of the Reopening Planning Committee and the presbyterate here in the Diocese of Peterborough. Their collective efforts have led to the development of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough's "Worship Safe" document which will guide the reopening of parishes. A copy of this document will be available on the website for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough.

May we continue to remember in prayer those who have died of COVID-19, those who have suffered with this illness, those who care for them and indeed, all who minister and serve in this time of pandemic.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ Daniel Miehm". The signature is written in a cursive style.

†Most Reverend Daniel J. Miehm
Bishop of Peterborough

†DJM/dlt