

WORSHIP SAFE

DIRECTIVES
CONCERNING CHURCH
OPERATIONS DURING
PANDEMIC AND
EPIDEMIC EMERGENCY
SITUATIONS

Roman Catholic Diocese of
Peterborough

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LETTER FROM MOST REVEREND BISHOP MIEHM



June 9, 2020

Dear Reverend Monsignor and Reverend Fathers,

This document deals with the various issues involved in the reopening of our churches and offices, and the resumption of the public celebration of Sacred liturgies in the Diocese of Peterborough. After the long period of lockdown brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, we must be attentive to opening in a manner that is prudent and responsible and which allows for the reverent celebration of the various rites of worship.

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. I am also deeply indebted to our Reopening Committee here in the Diocese of Peterborough, who worked to produce this document based on the ACBO directives and recommendations.

As we move through various phases of reopening, it is likely that some of these practices will be adapted and we will keep you informed of any changes. As we begin to resume parish life, it is important that we apply the directives in this document with consistency and the utmost care. I thank you for your diligent attention to this and for your ongoing pastoral care of your parishioners in these challenging times.

Yours in Christ,

+ Most Reverend Daniel Miehm
Bishop of Peterborough

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic of 2020 at which time these Directives are written reminds Christians that life on earth is both transitory and fleeting. Pandemics and epidemics have always been part of nature. While we are indebted to the science that detects and discerns these contagions, the best defense to them lies first and foremost in making use of the common sense that God has given us.

With God's grace, we hope that the Coronavirus will soon be vanquished and that our lives will return to normal and that we may return to our church buildings in which we have been unable to gather safely. Until that time, and in the event of future similar occurrences, we must conduct ourselves differently and take measures that do not promote further the spread of such viruses.

The Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Ontario on behalf of their member Archdioceses, Dioceses and Eparchies has developed guidelines to assist all clergy and lay people with the important but joyful task of re-opening our churches and keeping them open so that we can gather together to celebrate our Catholic faith. The ACBO benefited from the assistance of the Miller Thomson law firm, Catholic Mutual Insurers of Canada and Dr. Tim Cook, FRCPC, MPH, LCol (Ret'd).

The standards and recommendations set out in the ACBO Guideline have been developed with expert consultation. Minimum standards are provided which are prudent and in keeping with medical, legal and risk management advice, and that are, accordingly, to be implemented in all the parishes in Ontario. They are intended to be "best practices" for our Church and for the safety of our parishioners.

The ACBO Guideline has informed the development of this document for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough. The Diocese has benefited from the work of the ACBO to focus on the safe opening of our churches and the participation of the faithful in the celebration of the Eucharist and other Sacraments and Rites of the Catholic Church.

Additionally, this document provides direction for the opening of other premises (such as diocesan and parish offices and meeting spaces) in ways that help to prevent the occurrence and spread of viruses.

There is no guarantee that viruses such as the Coronavirus COVID-19 will not be contracted but the ACBO Guideline and this Diocesan document provide the best and most practical measures to ensure the safety of our people.

If a Pastor is unable to safely open the church following the enclosed guidance herein, contact the Bishop and please do not open your church.

CHAPTER ONE: PANDEMIC

What is a Pandemic/Epidemic?

A pandemic is an outbreak of disease that occurs throughout the world. These contagions generally fall into two categories: those spread by viruses, such as influenza or coronavirus; and those spread by bacteria, such as plague.

The recent COVID-19 pandemic is only the latest of a number of afflictions that have hit mankind since the beginning of recorded history.

Organisations, such as the World Health Organization, as well as governments, declare serious outbreaks of communicable disease as pandemics and epidemics bearing in mind their severity, their effect upon people, how readily they spread and the health damage and death which they may cause.

Pandemics start out as “epidemics” at first, the distinction being that the latter are local in scope. In days past, spread of pandemics and epidemics was somewhat limited as transport only came by ship or on foot, and measures such as quarantine and isolation would be easy to discern. However, in our modern age of diverse populations and unrestricted international travel, localised outbreaks rapidly become global in nature, particularly if the disease is not known to human immune systems. In our modern and international world with access to immediate and relatively inexpensive global travel, this trend is likely to continue.

COVID-19, which concerns us most at the time of the writing of this manual, originated in the City of Wuhan, in Central China. While its origins are not yet clear, we do know that within a month of the virus being made public, it quickly spread, becoming a pandemic by early March, 2020. Pandemics lessen in intensity through the development of “herd immunity” via natural infection or vaccines. Such pandemics may then become endemics, which means that they have stabilised and their rate of infection and their target populations can be predicted, and treatment and prevention methods can be employed. In some cases, the virus can be constrained or eradicated as in the case of smallpox.

Modern Pandemics

While the Black Death captivates our imagination for the terror it caused, the Spanish Flu (Influenza A, H1N1) that took place between 1918 and 1920 was the most deadly pandemic in modern history, infecting roughly a third of the world's population and responsible for causing over 20 million deaths, a number that greatly exceeded the losses experienced by the belligerents in World War One. Other notable pandemics include:

- 1958 Asian flu pandemic, imported a new strain of influenza A virus that killed an estimated 1.1 million people worldwide;

- 1968 “Hong Kong” flu (H3N2) pandemic was also caused by a new strain of the influenza virus that killed 1 million people worldwide.
- 2010 Swine Flu was caused by a new strain of the Spanish flu. Although it is said to have infected a billion people, it did not prove as deadly in effect.

More recently, there have been outbreaks of other severe diseases, including the deadly Ebola virus which has its origins in Central Africa. These outbreaks have been mostly isolated and governments have been careful to implement measures to restrict their transmission. As Ebola originates from an economically disadvantaged area, with less traffic and travel, the potential of the spreading of disease has been less worrisome, though it remains a significant threat.

We do not tend to think of the common flu bug as being a pandemic, but it is. The World Health Organization estimates that seasonal flu results in 290,000 to 650,000 deaths per year, mostly among the elderly or those with other health problems.

Challenges to Control COVID-19

Unlike the coronavirus that led to SARS in 2003, COVID-19 may be transmitted from individuals who are asymptomatic (never develop any symptoms) or pre-symptomatic (develop symptoms within a few days after acquiring and transmitting it). This has made quarantining less effective as it can only be applied to those with positive testing and/or symptoms. Testing for carriage of live virus to identify those who are contagious remains limited to those presenting to hospital or meeting specific criteria (healthcare or other first line workers) and is not widely available otherwise. Testing to confirm who may have had the infection in the past i.e., showing antibodies against the virus, remains unavailable through public health agencies in Canada. The limitation of these important testing resources has contributed to community transmission.

Viral and bacterial disease can be eliminated by following some common sense rules for daily living:

- Wash your hands regularly
- Wash your clothing regularly
- Avoid touching your face or anyone else
- Avoid travel to known contaminated areas
- Avoid contact with people known to be sick
- Seek medical attention if you are sick and follow medical advice
- Maintain appropriate distance from others
- If advised, wear personal protective equipment (PPE)
- If you feel ill or display symptoms of viral or bacterial infections, seek medical assistance and testing to ensure that you are fit for your duties.

CHAPTER TWO: PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

It is the responsibility of every bishop, priest, deacon, professed religious and layperson to ensure that a welcome and safe environment exists that allows for the faithful to assemble in our churches and related facilities. Only by visibly demonstrating the commitments to safety outlined in this manual can we send a message that we have taken the risks related to the pandemic seriously and acted reasonably and responsibly to mitigate them.

The attitude and demeanor of all clergy, pastoral staff members, and all liturgical ministers is paramount to engaging the faithful to recognize the dangers posed by pandemics, and adhere to the directives provided to ensure that our churches are places of safety and can remain open for public worship.

The measures recommended herein must mean more than staying clean and out of contact with one another. Their purpose is ultimately to preserve the safety of all who gather in our churches and related facilities, and to preserve the integrity of our liturgical celebrations by which our faith is nourished and sustained. The guidelines are also intended to alleviate any suggestion that the use of our churches for private prayer or gatherings for public prayer might in some way physically harbour or promote contagion, and therefore drive people away from the Church and the Sacraments.

In order for the guidelines to be effective, all clergy and pastoral liturgical ministers must be diligent and consistent in applying these recommended measures, without exception.

Only with this mindset can we communicate to our parishioners and the greater community the seriousness of the situation we presently face and demonstrate to them that we have their spiritual and physical wellbeing at heart.

Personnel

Each church and office shall designate a minimum of two persons who shall coordinate the fulfillment and enforcement of all guidelines and directives outlined in this manual. A parish priest may be one of the two who takes on this role, particularly in smaller parishes; however, he must be able to fulfill this role without exception.

CHAPTER THREE: GOVERNMENT ORDERS AND HEALTH UNIT DIRECTIVES

Government orders concerning closing of businesses and public institutions such as churches and church facilities must be observed and obeyed. Nothing in this document should be construed as over-riding the lawful order of public authorities, be they federal, provincial or municipal.

The Diocese will monitor government directives and will ascertain their application to religious facilities and will communicate the same to each parish.

Should any public authority request that a church facility be closed due to health and safety concerns, such an order should be complied with and immediately reported to the diocesan bishop or administrator.

On no account should any public comment be made concerning an order made by a public authority. Directives of public health officials, police and others in authority should be complied with without argument. Any enquiries concerning the appropriateness of any action should be addressed by the office of the bishop.

These guidelines may be adjusted, as needed, to respond to a phased-in approach to re-opening our churches.

Government Orders and Health Unit Directives will be followed to safeguard the health and wellness of clergy, staff and the faithful.

Health Units and Medical Officers of Health

<p>North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit</p> <p>345 Oak Street West, North Bay, ON, P1B 2T2 Tel: (705) 474-1400 Fax: (705) 474-8252 Web: http://www.myhealthunit.ca Medical Officer of Health/Executive Officer: Dr. Jim Chirico Board of Health Chair: Nancy Jacko</p>	<p>Durham Region Health Department</p> <p>605 Rossland Road East, PO Box 730 Whitby, ON, L1N 0B2 Tel: (905) 668-7711 Fax: (905) 666-6214 Web: https://www.durham.ca/en/health-and-wellness/health-and-wellness.aspx Medical Officer of Health & Commissioner: Dr. Robert Kyle Board of Health (Health & Social Services Committee) Chair: John Henry</p>	<p>Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit</p> <p>200 Rose Glen Road Port Hope, ON, L1A 3V6 Tel: (866) 888-4577 Fax: (905) 885-9551 Web: http://www.hkpr.on.ca Medical Officer of Health: Dr. Lynn Noseworthy Board of Health Chair: Cammie Jaquays</p>
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<p>Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit</p> <p>15 Sperling Drive Barrie, ON L4M 6K9 Tel: (705) 721-7520 Fax: (705) 721-1495 Web: http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org Medical Officer of Health & Chief Executive Officer: Dr. Charles Gardner Board of Health Chair: Anita Dubeau</p>	<p>Peterborough Public Health Unit</p> <p>Jackson Square, 185 King St. Peterborough, ON, K9J 2R8 Tel: (705) 743-1000 Fax: (705) 743-2897 Web: http://www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca Medical Officer of Health: Dr. Rosana Salvaterra Board of Health Chair: Kathryn Wilson</p>	<p>Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Health Unit</p> <p>179 North Park Street Belleville, ON K8P 4P1 Tel: (613) 966-5500 Fax: (613) 966-9418 Web: http://hpepublichealth.ca/ Acting Medical Officer of Health: Dr. Piotr Oglaza Board of Health Chair: Jo-Anne Albert</p>
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Peterborough Public Health Unit

Cathedral of St. Peter In Chains
Immaculate Conception Parish
Our Lady of Assumption, Otonabee
St. John the Evangelist, Keene
St. Anne Parish
St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish
Sacred Heart Parish
St. John the Baptist Parish
St. Joseph Parish, Douro
St. Thomas More Parish, Millbrook
St. Martin of Tours Parish, Ennismore
St. Paul Parish, Norwood
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Mission, Havelock
St. Paul the Apostle Parish, Lakefield
St. Jean de Brebeuf Mission, Buckhorn
Our Lady of Good Counsel Mission, Young's Point
St. Patrick Parish, Kinmount
St. Mary of the Purification Mission, Chandos Lake
Diocesan Pastoral Centre

Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit

St. Mary Parish, Lindsay
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Cardiff
St. John Vianney Mission, Highland Grove
Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Port Hope
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Hastings
Sacred Heart Mission, Harwood
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (St. Mary) Parish, Grafton
Our Lady Queen of Peace, Bobcaygeon / St. Aloysius, Fenelon Falls
St. John Parish, Kirkfield
St. Margaret Mary Mission, Coboconk
Our Lady Help of Christians Mission, Kirkfield

St. Anthony Mission, Woodville
St. Luke Parish, Downeyville
St. Michael Parish, Cobourg
Our Lady of Fatima Mission, Minden
Holy Angels Parish, Brighton
Korean Martyrs, Brighton
St. Jerome Mission, Warkworth
Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Campbellford

Hastings and Prince Edward Counties Health Unit

St. Alphonsus Parish, Wooler

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Honey Harbour
St. John the Baptist Mission, Port Severen
St. Joseph Parish, Bracebridge
St. John the Baptist Mission, Minett
St. Mary Parish, Huntsville
St. Kateri Tekakwitha Mission, Baysville
Mission of St. Mary of the Assumption, Dwight
St. Paul Parish, Gravenhurst
St. James the Great Parish, Mactier
St. Anne Mission, Port Carling

Durham Region Health Unit

St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Newcastle
St. Joseph Parish, Bowmanville
St. Therese Parish, Courtice
St. Bernadette Mission, Nestleton

North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit

St. Joseph Parish, Powassan
St. John Mission, Nipissing
St. Patrick Parish, Kearney
Holy Spirit Mission, Burk's Falls
St. Peter the Apostle Parish, Parry Sound
Mission of St. Peter, (Killbear) Nobel
Sacred Heart Parish, Trout Creek
St. Augustine Mission, South River
St. Mary Mission, Port Loring
Holy Family Parish, Britt
St. Therese Mission, Pointe au Baril
St. Michael Mission, Rosseau

Health Unit Boundaries and Information at:

<https://www.phdapps.health.gov.on.ca/PHULocator/Default.aspx>

CHAPTER FOUR: PRECAUTIONS, SYMPTOMS, AND REPORTING

Pray always.

Stay at home as much as possible.

Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly.

Observe physical distance.

Wear a face mask or face shield when physical distancing is not possible.

Connect with others virtually.

Say “thank you” to frontline staff and community workers.

Precautions: Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

While the use of personal protective equipment (face masks, face shields, gloves, plastic screens) does not guarantee that one will neither give nor receive a pandemic or other virus, they are, if used correctly, means of lessening the potential of transmission.

All in the assembly are strongly encouraged to wear a mask upon the recommendation of a Medical Officer of Health. Should a Medical Officer of Health determine that the use of a face mask is mandatory, the parishioners will be expected to comply before entering the parish.

The priest celebrating Mass is not to wear a mask or disposable gloves during the liturgy unless directed by a Medical Officer of Health. The priest must thoroughly wash his hands before and after Mass and before and after distributing Holy Communion.

Anyone stationed at an entranceway, where there will be a great number of people passing, should wear disposable gloves, a face mask and/or a face shield.

Persons handling money from collections should be provided with the opportunity to regularly wash their hands. They must wear disposable gloves and have access to a hand sanitizer. Persons cleaning any facilities or who are involved in sacristan duties before or after the liturgy should wear disposable gloves, a face mask and/or a face shield and they may request clothing covering protection. At their request, this clothing protection will be provided.

Symptoms

Most viral pandemics involve fever since it is the body's reaction to fighting off infection. **Clergy and all parishioners are advised that self-monitoring of their temperature should take place at the rectory or home prior to gathering at the parish. If the priest has an elevated temperature, he should not celebrate Mass.**

In addition to temperature, other potential symptoms of viral contagion include:

- coughing and wheezing
- fatigue
- loss of appetite
- shortage of breath
- excessive sputum
- aching muscles
- headaches, chills, confusion, runny nose, shaking.

A combination of any or all of the above and a fever gives a strong inference to an underlying illness of which anyone should be concerned.

Reporting

Clergy and staff who exhibit any of the signs associated with COVID-19 should complete the Self-Assessment Test (www.publichealthontario.ca), get tested at a local site, and if positive - notify the Office of the Bishop. Similarly, volunteers and liturgical ministers should notify the parish priest of a positive test result.

Under no circumstances should anyone with present but undiagnosed symptoms awaiting test verification attend a church or have contact with other people until a diagnosis is confirmed.

Parishioners are asked to self-screen before attending church, including taking their temperature. Those with a temperature above 37.5° C/98.6° F are asked to not attend Mass. Those who exhibit fever or any other indications of a viral infections are asked to seek medical attention before coming to church. In order to mitigate the potential spread of the virus, the Chief Medical Officer for the Province of Ontario, is asking that all those over the age of 3 wear

a mask/face covering when physical distancing is challenging. While not mandatory, they are highly recommended.

Should anyone present with COVID-19 symptoms and become ill during Mass, that is, the celebrant, those assisting with the Mass, and parishioners, they should be advised to leave and seek medical assistance. Anyone who might attend to the ill person should wear disposable gloves and a protective mask, and should further wash thoroughly after any contact, even if gloves and a mask are worn.

CHAPTER FIVE: CLEANING, PREPARING AND POSTING SIGNAGE

NOTE *Prior to the opening of churches and adjacent facilities, the following rules about cleaning, preparing and posting signage must be implemented in all Catholic churches, and where applicable, all parish halls and offices where the public may attend.*

Supervision

Churches should never be left open unsupervised. Compliance with physical distancing should be enforced by an attendant in charge. Any refusal to comply should be reported to the pastor or member of the pastoral staff.

CLEANING

Cleaning of Churches and Related Facilities

Churches should always be clean and tidy; however, in times of pandemic, extra care and attention must be taken to ensure that surfaces remain as clean as possible to reduce the transmission of infection.

All staff engaged in cleaning (including the handling of soiled laundry or waste materials) should wear a mask and disposable gloves. In addition, hand sanitizer should be available throughout the performance of their duties if handwashing is not readily available. Masks are to be disposed of when dirty or no later than the end of the day. Gloves should be changed as often as necessary (usually at the end of any task or after cleaning a washroom facility).

All surfaces (floors, seating, kneelers) are to be wiped at least once per week with warm water and an approved multi surface cleaner / disinfectant purporting to kill 99.9% of germs and viruses (note this would include products like Lysol, Pine-Sol, etc). It is recommended all pew fronts and the tops and sides of benches are to be wiped with a wood-friendly sanitizing agent after each event.

Cleaning Materials for Disinfecting

Difference between Cleaning and Disinfecting:

- Cleaning with soap removes dirt and grime
- Disinfecting kills germs
- We need to make sure we are doing both

- Use the right product correctly

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/COVID-19.html>

Disinfectant Hand Sanitizer Dispensing Machines

Each church should have a minimum of two of these devices at the entrance and exits doors of the church. Each parishioner should be directed to sanitize their hands before entering the church.

If possible, these devices should be touchless or operated with a foot pedal option if available and should be inspected before each celebration to ensure that they are filled and the batteries within them are operating. They should be cleaned and refilled before each liturgy. They should be inspected for use, cleaned and, if necessary, the content of the disinfectant receptacle must be replaced if it is empty before each liturgy.

Sacred Vessels

All sacred vessels used in the liturgy are to be cleaned with warm soapy water and hot rinse after they have been purified following each Mass.

Volunteer Cleaning Brigade

The pastor may solicit cleaning assistance from volunteers. The volunteers must follow the Volunteer Screening Guidelines for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough. The pastor should provide the volunteer cleaning brigade with the disinfectant cleaning materials, gloves, and a face mask and/or a face shield. The volunteer cleaners may request protective clothing which will be provided by the parish.

PREPARING

Purchasing

Order protective equipment for the use of parish clergy and staff. These supplies should be available for clergy and staff to use for their safety and to protect the safety of others.

- Face masks for clergy and staff (N95 not required);
- Small supply of face masks for parishioners if so determined by the pastor;
- Face shields (suggested not required);
- Plastic disposable gloves for clergy, staff and volunteers;

- Hand Sanitizer; source and buy in bulk and large quantities if possible;
- Touchless hand sanitizer dispenser or foot pedal style, not required but suggested;
- Liquid Hand Soap;
- Touchless hand soap dispensers, not required but suggested;
- Disinfectant solutions for in depth and continuous cleaning all surfaces. Be aware of any allergies or sensitives in the parish prior to ordering.
- Disinfectant solutions for in depth and continuous cleaning all surfaces. Be aware of any allergies or sensitives in the parish prior to ordering;
- Touchless hand sanitizer dispenser, not required but suggested;
- Tally Counter, not required but suggested.
- Batteries for touchless hand sanitizers;
- Painter’s Tape in bright colours (many rolls) for physical distancing marking and enter exit arrows.

Preparing the Church for the Liturgy

In addition to cleaning and disinfecting the church and adjacent facilities before the use of the church for the liturgy or for personal prayer, the following norms are to be observed.

General Safety

Prior to commencement of Mass, the ushers need to survey the church to ensure that all slip, trip and fall hazards are identified and corrected, all cleaning and sanitizing measures have been adhered to, all entrance and exit doors are in normal working condition, all signage is adequately displayed and all social distancing measures are functional ie.: pew closures, floor markings, signage, etc.

Parishioners

Strive to reach out to parishioners with news about the reopening through various means of communication and social media.

The pandemic has taught us that it is important to have the emails of parishioners and every parish should endeavour to assemble a list in the coming weeks and months. Inform the parishioners that the email addresses are being collected for use by the parish clergy and lay staff. They will not be released to other groups or individuals and the emails will include an “unsubscribe” button should the parishioner wish to stop receiving the emails. Items that the parishes might distribute by email are alerts of a parish website update, the parish bulletin, notices about parish events, information from the Diocese, etc. Make a contact list of the parishioners’ email addresses. Put them in an email group for use by the parish clergy and staff.

Capacity Control

As churches reopen, parishes will face the challenge of determining who can attend Mass and how to regulate the numbers. Some parishes may wish to consider the following methods to regulate capacity:

- Use of an online type reservation system for Mass (through EventBrite, SurveyMonkey, Sign-Up Genius, etc.) along with phone reservations for those without computer access.
- Designate Masses for particular communities i.e., Saturday evening Mass for seniors, Sunday 9 a.m. for those with last name A-G, 10:30 a.m. H-L, etc.
- First come, first served – line up similar to what is done at other businesses currently open with limited capacity.

It is recognized that none of these methods are perfect – it will remain a challenge to find the most efficient way to meet capacity restrictions in a pastorally sensitive way. However, once open, it is important that a volunteer be responsible for ensuring the church is not over capacity at any time.

The Universal Application of Physical Distancing

In all cases, when community gatherings take place, or when individuals are using the church or other facilities, a physical two-meter (six-foot) distance, is to be strictly maintained. This is necessary to avoid:

- personal contact
- transmission of any particle fluid/spray from one's mouth or nose
- deposit residue on surfaces from one's hands or face.

The above actions account for the majority of transmission of disease issues. Resolve them and the opportunity for infection is significantly reduced.

During the week, if the church is open for private prayer or for liturgies with small groups, it is recommended that seating be restricted to one area so as to obviate the cleaning of other areas.

Disinfectant cleanser to be used should not be damaging to wooden surfaces, but should be germicidal, meaning having an alcohol content of 70%.

It is generally accepted that any surface contagion on floors, pews and other surfaces will live no longer than 72 hours. If there are gaps of 72 hours between the use of the church, no further cleaning/disinfecting need take place.

When someone falls sick in the church, the area within a two-meter (six-foot) radius is to be thoroughly cleaned before it can be used again.

Any washroom that is soiled must be closed pending cleaning with an approved multi surface cleaner/ disinfectant that promotes to killing 99.9% of germs and viruses.

Seating

During the pandemic, to ensure that physical distancing takes place, seating should be staggered in patterns to promote two-metre (six-foot) distances. Seating patterns should avoid individuals sitting next to an aisle. Seats may be designated by tape markings.

Seating for Personal Prayer

Make “cards” of 6 inches by 6 inches or larger using colourful paper.

Print or paste the COVID-19 pandemic prayer on them. The prayer is found at the end of this document.

These cards will be given to individuals who come to pray at the parish and left behind when they leave to signal the need for a targeted cleaning of the area. **The card will be thrown out by the cleaner. They cannot be reused.** Make a lot of them – you can't have too many.

Floors and Aisles

In high traffic areas (entrances and aisles) tape must be used to designate spacing of two-meter (six-foot) increments and also indicate the direction of movement. The tape should be a bright colour and distinguished from the colour of the floor surface. The tape should be of sufficient quality to remain in place and so that it can be removed or repaired without harm to the surfaces. The tape should be inspected after every Sunday to ensure it is in good condition and remains visible.

Disabled Area

Those who attend church with a personal mobility device should be placed in a designated area with sufficient space to allow a two-meter (six-foot) space between each person.

Sanctuary

Seating in the sanctuary should be limited and must be arranged to ensure two-metre (six-foot) distancing.

Sacristy

Entrance to the sacristy is to be limited to those who are required to prepare for the liturgy. If the room is small and does not allow for the required distancing, one person at a time should use the room. All surfaces in the room are to be kept clean.

Small Chapels/Devotional Areas for Holy Adoration

Unless it is not possible to ensure two-meters (six-foot) distancing, small Chapels and Devotional Areas may remain open.

Confessionals and Reconciliation Chapels

Most confessionals and reconciliation chapels are too small to ensure physical distancing. A larger room elsewhere in the parish complex should be used. A portable kneeler with a screen may be used by the penitent who wishes to remain anonymous, provided the penitent wears a mask and disposable gloves. The penitent should wipe the door handle with disinfectant upon leaving the room. Where physical distancing cannot be achieved, an impermeable screen is to be placed between the penitent and priest. The screen is to be cleaned between each confession.

Church Entrances

Where possible, weather permitting, it is recommended that the doors of the church should be open to avoid contact with handles. If this is not possible, ushers, wearing masks and disposable gloves, should assist.

Distribution Materials for Sale or Sharing

In order to avoid surface contact, all printed material such as bulletins, pamphlets and newspapers should be removed. Areas for the sale of religious articles should be closed.

Holy Water Fonts

Holy water fonts are to remain empty until such time as they may be used safely.

Crying Rooms

Crying rooms are to be closed.

Overflow Crowds and Standing Room

This is to be discouraged unless there is sufficient space to allow for distancing and for aisles to be clear so that traffic is not impeded.

Meeting Rooms

All adjacent meeting rooms are to remain closed during Sunday Mass.

Church Halls

Church/parish halls should be closed for now until parishes become comfortable with the safety processes necessary for re-opening during a pandemic. Prior to opening a church/parish hall, the pastor will seek direction from the local bishop.

Hymnals, Prayer Books, Envelopes

Remove the *Catholic Book of Worship III, Glory and Praise, Gather*, and any other hymnals from the pews. Store them safely so that they can be placed in the pews again when you are directed that these items can be safely returned to the church.

Elevators

Only one person (with an assistant, as needed) is to use the elevator, preferably with an attendant who will ensure that doors and handles are kept clean after each use.

POSTING SIGNAGE

Notices

It is important to post notices in prominent places at all entrances to the church (as well as through social media and the parish website) regarding the requirements for entering the church and participating in any liturgical celebrations. Notices should include the following directives:

- If you feel sick or your temperature is elevated, or you are experiencing any of the following symptoms coughing and wheezing, fatigue, loss of appetite, shortness of breath, excessive sputum, aching muscles, headaches, chills, confusion, runny nose, shaking, you are asked to refrain from entering the church.
- You are reminded that if you are sick or your health is compromised, you are not obligated to participate in Sunday Mass.
- Be sure to use the hand sanitizer before entering the church .
- Be sure to follow the guidance of the ushers/ministers of hospitality and sit only in the designated places to ensure physical distancing at all times.
- Avoid touching your face or other persons.

The notice may also include information regarding overflow seating or additional Sunday Masses being provided in the Parish on Sunday. Announcements regarding the reception of Communion and egress can best be made during and at the conclusion of the liturgy.

Signage

Signs are to be posted at the entrance(s) of the church listing times of liturgical celebrations and times when the church will be open for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and personal prayer.

In the Chapter on Communication in this document, there are samples of the signage to be posted.

Washrooms

Close all but one washroom and post “closed” signs on the washrooms and one “open” sign. Post a sign that says the washroom is NOT cleaned after each use. Hand washing signs are also to be placed in the washroom. A sanitizing fluid device (preferably touchless) should be placed outside each washroom.

Water Fountains

Water fountains or coolers should be turned off for the duration of the pandemic. If the water supply cannot be turned off each water fountain or cooler should be clearly marked as being “out of service”.

CHAPTER SIX: CELEBRATION OF SUNDAY MASS

The Assembly

All in the assembly (with the exception of the priest and ministers unless they are so directed by a Medical Officer of Health) are strongly encouraged to wear a mask. It is the recommendation of the Ontario Medical Officer of Health to wear a mask if there is the chance that physical distancing might not be maintained.

Ministers of Hospitality

Ushers or ministers of hospitality are to be present before Mass at the entrance(s) to the church to direct people to the hand sanitizers and to their seats while observing physical distancing. If physical distancing cannot be maintained or if ushers are opening doors, the usher should wear a mask and possibly disposable gloves. The ushers will be counting the parishioners entering the parish to ensure that the 30% building capacity limit is maintained.

Prayers before Mass

Where it is the custom for the people to pray the Rosary or other devotional prayers before Mass, this practice may continue.

The Priest

The priest celebrating Mass is not to wear a mask or disposable gloves during the liturgy unless he is directed to do by a Medical Officer of Health. The priest will wash or sanitize his hands before and after Mass and before and after distributing Holy Communion. This hand washing is distinct from the ritual washings/lavabo that take place during the Mass.

Music During Mass

Unfortunately, singing is a major way in which moist particulate is pushed out of the body through breathing and the projecting of one's voice. Parishioners attending at Mass are advised not to sing due to the heightened potential spreading of airborne contagion.

Instrumental music may be played. There will be no singing.

Entrance Procession

The entrance procession takes place directly from the sacristy. If the sacristy is located at the main entrance to the church, every effort should be made to maintain physical distancing (i.e., by having people seated away from the centre aisle).

It is recommended that only the priest participate in the procession. The Book of the Gospels if it is used should be placed on the altar before Mass.

There is no altar server.

The Introductory Rites

The priest leads the Introductory Rites in the usual manner from the chair or the altar. If led from the Chair, the celebrant should use a simple lectern for the Roman Missal.

Liturgy of the Word

The Liturgy of the Word takes place in the usual manner. In order to minimize contact with the Lectionary, it is recommended that only one lector proclaim the Scripture readings from the Lectionary already placed on the ambo. The lector may be seated in the assembly and should be close to the ambo. As there is no singing, the responsorial psalm should be recited by the lector. Following the second reading, the lector removes the Lectionary so that the priest (or deacon) can proclaim the Gospel. No candles are used for the Gospel. The Creed is professed and the Prayers of the Faithful are offered.

Children's Liturgy of the Word

The celebration of the Children's Liturgy of the Word is not permitted during the pandemic.

Offertory

The monetary collection is omitted at the usual time and the bread and wine are not presented in procession as usual. The collection is to be received at the doors of the church at the end of Mass where people can place their donations in baskets supervised by ushers from a safe distance. The bread and wine are placed on the credence table near the altar before Mass.

Credence Table

In addition to all that is needed for the Eucharistic Prayer and Communion, hand sanitizer and/or warm water with soap should be placed on the credence table to be used by the priest and ministers before and after distributing Holy Communion.

Vessels on the Altar

It is recommended, where possible, to place the ciboria containing hosts for the assembly at some distance from the priest's chalice and paten. If the ciboria have covers, these may remain in place during the Eucharistic Prayer.

Eucharistic Prayer

The Eucharistic Prayer is prayed by the priest with the assembly making the usual responses and acclamations but without singing. Whenever the priest is praying with hands joined, it is important that his hands not be near his face.

Communion Rite

The Greeting of Peace is maintained; however, no sign such as shaking hands is permitted during the pandemic. A simple bow of the head towards one's neighbour may be offered as a sign of peace.

Holy Communion is distributed by the priest and extraordinary ministers of Communion. All ministers of Holy Communion are to sanitize their hands before distributing the Eucharist.

Concelebration is discouraged at this time. If it occurs, concelebrants are to receive Holy Communion from a separate chalice and paten. Only the celebrant, at this time, receives from the chalice.

The dialogue between the Eucharistic Minister and communicant occurs at a two metres (six feet) physical distance. After the dialogue, the communicant approaches the Eucharistic Minister who carefully places the Body of Christ in the communicant's hand without touching the person.

Upon the strong recommendation of medical authorities, Communion is received only in the hand at this time. (Since each communicant has the right to receive communion either on the tongue or in the hand, the traditional practice of the option of receiving on the tongue will be restored as soon as the public health situation allows for that). Communicants are instructed to remove their gloves and masks, using the straps and without touching the front of their masks, while the person ahead of them is receiving Holy Communion. If any contact is made with the communicant's hand, the priest must purify his hands in the lavabo bowl and then wash or sanitize his hands.

It is desirable that the priest remind the people that they are to place one open hand upon the other to reverently receive the Sacred Host.

The Precious Blood should not be received at this time. Communion is received under only one species.

Ushers need to direct people to the Minister of Communion to ensure physical distancing. This may require a careful consideration of the church lay-out to ensure that the physical distance is maintained. Pastors will need to train the ushers beforehand and a simple announcement will need to be made until people are used to this new procedure for the Communion procession. The new procedure will ensure that communicants do not encroach on each other or pass one another within the 6 feet or 2 metre physical distancing.

Following the distribution of Holy Communion, the remaining Eucharist is placed in the tabernacle in the usual manner. All vessels are placed on the credence table, to be taken by a priest or sacristan to the sacristy following Mass. There they will be washed with soapy water.

Communion to the Sick and Homebound

During this initial phase of reopening, extraordinary ministers of Communion to the sick who are duly appointed will bring a pyx to the Mass and will present it to the priest when they come to receive Holy Communion.

Concluding Rites

The concluding rites take place in the usual manner. Any necessary announcements may be made. In particular, people are to be reminded to place their offerings in the baskets provided and to follow the direction of the ushers or ministers of hospitality when exiting the church in an orderly way, while maintaining physical distancing. Parishioners are instructed to leave the church without spending social time with the priest and fellow parishioners at the door or in the parking lot. The use of printed bulletins shall be suspended so as to reduce physical contact.

CHAPTER SEVEN: OTHER RITES CELEBRATED IN THE CHURCH

Since these rites take place in the church, the requirements for preparing the space, physical distancing, the use of music and procedures for liturgical ministers as they apply to the particular rite are to be observed.

Baptism

The baptism of infants and young children is celebrated in the usual manner. In order to respect physical distancing and limit the number of participants, it is recommended that baptisms not be celebrated during Mass at this time. Nor are they to be celebrated communally, i.e., with several families at a time. With the exception of maintaining physical distancing among family and friends, and the priest or deacon washing or sanitizing his hands before and after the pouring of water and anointing, the Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated in the usual manner according to the Rite of Baptism. The water in the font is to be replaced after each baptism.

Christian Initiation of Adults

The Christian Initiation of Adults (including children of catechetical age) is celebrated during Mass, since the rite includes the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist. The Reception into Full Communion is also to be celebrated during Mass. It is recommended that these rites not take place at this time during the Sunday Mass.

Marriage

Marriages may be celebrated with small communities, according to the number of people permitted by health authorities. The norms for physical distancing pertain to all present with the exception of the bride and groom.

Reconciliation

Opportunities to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation are to be posted for the faithful. The place for the celebration of the sacrament is outlined in this document. For those waiting to celebrate the sacrament, social distancing must be observed.

Funerals

Funeral Masses may be celebrated in the church, according to the number of people permitted by health authorities. Priests and deacons will collaborate with Funeral Home staff to take all the necessary precautions to ensure the health and safety of all who participate.

First Communion and Confirmation

The scheduling of First Communion and Confirmation for children is the responsibility of the local parish and the bishop's office. The norms for celebrating Sunday Mass apply to these celebrations.

CHAPTER EIGHT: A NEW WAY OF WORKING FOR STAFF AT PARISH/DIOCESAN OFFICES

In addition to the recommendations outlined below, pastors (and those designated for planning the re-opening of the parish/diocesan office) should consult the website for the Ontario Ministry of Labour Workplace Safety and Prevention Services. This website contains the updated *Guidance on Health and Safety for Office Administration and Secretarial Staff during COVID-19*. Furthermore, reference should be made to www.pshsa.ca for a copy of “*Health and Safety Guidance During COVID-19 For Employers of Office Settings*.”

Workplace Environment

Staff are entitled not to be put in dangerous work situations. At no time should staff be exposed to people known to be suffering from a pandemic contagion.

Staff and clergy who are suffering from any diagnosed or suspected pandemic contagion are not to enter the office or parish and should consult the Public Health Ontario website or their physician.

Staff who have been exposed to someone who is a suspected or a confirmed sufferer of a pandemic contagion are required to obtain a test confirming that they do not have the virus and are not to attend work until they produce the results from such test.

Four (4) Phases of Reopening in the Diocese of Peterborough

Phase 1: Buildings Closed (current situation) – Only essential staff in the buildings/offices on a limited, scheduled basis to pick up mail or have cheques signed, not on site daily, access only with Pastors consent and scheduled visit(s). Buildings closed to visitors/clients. Alarm security system (as applicable), no cleaning/garbage pick-up at workplace except by pastor.

Phase 2: Limited Operations – Enhanced Cleaning Protocols MUST be completed in the workplace prior to staff returning to the workplace.

Limited staff and volunteers in the building approximately 50% of parish staff or a maximum of three (3) on-site on a rotational, staggered schedule, employees who are able splitting time between remote work and onsite, no visitors/clients. Virtual meetings only. Restrictions on gatherings at parish – kitchen, chapel, meeting areas, etc. Access by code or locked door only. Alarm security system, regular garbage pick-up, **enhanced cleaning protocols**. Clergy and staff to complete COVID-19 Health and Safety courses prior to returning to the workplace. Complete Parish workplace checklist prior to reopening. Staff are asked to stay at home if they have any symptoms, even mild cold or flu like.

Continued flexible, staggered or remote work arrangements maybe required in Phase 2 – 3.

Phase 3: Parish Open with Restrictions – approximately 75% of Parish staff and volunteers to a maximum of six (6) on-site on a rotational, staggered scheduled – reception operational - limited client visits/meetings by appointment, restrictions on group gatherings at the Parish, physical distancing in office settings, etc. - visitors can enter the Parish Office on a scheduled basis (i.e. – not all at once). Potential need for PPE hard plastic being placed between office and public, like some retail and shopping locations. Staff are asked to stay at home if they have any symptoms, even mild cold or flu like.

Phase 4: Return to full operations without restrictions - 100% of parish staff on-site – some flexible work arrangements may remain. Be cautious and continue to practice good hygiene. Staff are asked to stay at home if they have any symptoms, even mild cold or flu like.

Training

Staff must complete the four (4) online training courses detailed below on the diocesan dashboard prior to a return to the workplace:

- COVID-19 The Basics of Protection
- COVID-19 Personal Protective Equipment
- COVID-19 The Signage and Screening
- COVID-19 Material Handling

Enhanced Safety at the Workplace

Sign in Book

- All employees to sign in and out in Phases 2 and 3 unless the employee is completing a timesheet.
- To account for all staff in the event of emergency or evacuation
- To give to Public Health in the event contact tracing is required

Face Masks or Shields

Parish Staff are provided and asked to wear reusable, filtered and washable face masks for entry and exiting the Parish building. If it is deemed essential, staff may be provided plastic face shields, this is not a requirement but shall be based on individual parish determination.

Touch-Free Dispensers

Touch-free hand sanitizer stations and soap dispensers are to be used upon entry to parish buildings. Regular hand washing and wearing gloves are required when handling cleaning products and PPE.

Locked Front Door

Limited access only in Phases 2 and 3 and the door to the parish building is locked.

Visitor Policy

Phases 1 and 2 – No visitors will be allowed aside from deliveries and essential tradespeople.

Phase 3 and 4:

Visitors must sign in at the reception office and include contact information in the event contact tracing is required. Visitors must sign declaration that they are free of symptoms, have not travelled outside of the province recently, and have not been in contact with a COVID-19 patient. Visitors must wear a face mask, sanitize their hands upon entry and be escorted by clergy or staff while on-site. Guests meeting at the parish building will be picked up at the reception office, escorted to the meeting and then escorted back to the door when finished.

Phase 3 – All visitors must have a valid reason for which an in-person meeting is required and the meeting should be scheduled by appointment only. Always maintain 6 feet of distance when speaking with visitors. The employee or priest may place markers on the floor if a visual reminder is required.

Phase 4 – Open for all guests and visitors, following current medical health requirements and precautions.

Enhanced Cleaning Protocols

Staff who are performing cleaning roles or who have direct contact with the public should be issued disposable gloves and masks to be worn when carrying out their duties.

Disposable masks and hand sanitizer must be made available to visitors to a parish/diocesan office.

All office washrooms are limited to office staff only and not available for public use.

All office visits must be made by appointment and pre-arranged by telephone. If a matter can be addressed by telephone, then meetings in person should be avoided.

Staff must be advised and reminded about the need for physical distancing. If staff can

productively work from home, such arrangements may be agreed upon. Otherwise, facilities such as kitchens, lunchrooms or break rooms should be closed or divided so as to allow for two-metre (six-foot) physical distances between chairs, etc.

Employees who refuse or fail to follow prescribed rules concerning pandemic contagion may be subject to workplace discipline. Volunteers who refuse or fail to follow such direction may be suspended from any further volunteer work.

The basic social distancing, floor marking, washroom policies, etc. all apply as per the instructions above that pertain to churches.

Temperature/Personal Protective Equipment/Hand Sanitizer/Physical Layout

Parishioners should be advised to visit the office only for urgent/necessary business. A notice at the entrance to the office should be posted for visitors which includes the following directives:

- If you feel sick or your temperature is elevated, or you are experiencing any symptoms of illness, you are asked to refrain from entering the office.
- Only one person is to be admitted to the office at a time.
- Be sure to use the hand sanitizer before entering the work or worship space.
- Be sure to maintain a physical two-metre (six-foot) distance at all times; stand and sit only in the designated places.
- Avoid touching your face or other persons.

It is recommended that both visitors and staff members wear PPE during meetings in the office.

Staff who interact with colleagues or with the public should take their temperature at home and if it is above 37.5 C, they should remain at home.

Bottles of hand sanitizer should be left upon each working desk and counter.

Where required, at a desk or counter where there is to be interaction between staff and office visitors, a plastic screen may be erected so as to negate the potential for the spread of airborne viral or bacterial contagion. Screens should be of dimensions not less than 90 cm x 90 cm (3'x3'), and these may be solid or transparent Plexiglas. Plastic or saran or film wrap stretched over a frame will accomplish the same purpose. These surfaces and all other surfaces in the office should be wiped with a disinfectant cloth on a regular basis. Office telephones should be restricted to staff use only.

If meetings must take place on site, such should be done bearing in mind physical distancing and the wearing of masks and gloves.

Vacation Entitlement and Usage

Some employees submitted vacation requests prior to the office closures. These vacations were booked but not taken when travel restrictions were imposed. If any of these scheduled days were not taken due to the closures, they remain in the employee's vacation bank accrual for future use. It will be the employee's responsibility to notify their supervisor when the vacation time is rescheduled.

All full-time staff are to schedule at least one week of paid vacation which is to be taken by December 31, 2020. These days do not have to be taken in succession. Employees may request specific dates and it will be up to the Supervisor to approve or deny requests and to ensure there is adequate coverage. If an employee does not book 5 vacation days, the Supervisor may assign a vacation week or days based on the needs of the parish location. The employer has the right to schedule vacation under the *Employment Standards Act*. Specifically, for 2020 only and related to COVID-19, employees may carry over 10 vacation days to 2021. This is not standard policy.

Travel

All non-essential work travel should be cancelled until further notice - this includes group training sessions and conferences.

Once the restrictions have been lifted, staff undertaking business or leisure travel should request approval before taking and after completing such travel. If they are traveling to suspected areas of contagion, staff should undergo testing, self-quarantine and obtain a doctor's note before returning to work. If a cleric is planning a trip outside Canada, the person should be asked to purchase travel insurance which then limits the exposure to the MSSO benefits program.

Hiring and Wage Freeze

The hiring freeze on any new positions unless there is a compelling business reason to create the role remains in effect. Any vacated positions due to resignation, retirement or involuntary termination should only be filled if operationally essential. Before deciding to rehire, see if the work tasks can be accomplished by an existing role as a cost-savings measure. Consultation must occur with Deb McRae when deeming a role essential and rehiring, along with the Authorization to Hire approval form.

Employees who were laid-off due to COVID-19 must be extended or recalled back to work based on legislative requirements.

Effective June 1st, 2020, the Diocese has implemented a wage freeze for all current employees, until further notice.

Contracted Vendors

Effective immediately all initial invoices must be signed off by the Pastor or Administrator prior to payment being issued. Written agreements with clear termination provisions must be put in place for any vendor including existing vendors operating without a written agreement via Independent Contract Package including a police check. New vendors may not be engaged without prior written approval from Deb McRae.

A copy of all current or new parish Independent Contract Packages must be provided to the Diocesan Pastoral Centre prior to the return to contracted work.

All discretionary spending continues to be on HOLD. Overhead and building costs are the only expenses that should be incurred by parishes. No capital spending is to be undertaken except to complete a project that has already commenced or for a matter that cannot be postponed (i.e. roof leak).

If a parish is undertaking a capital project or the parish contracts external services from vendors (grass cutting, cleaners, etc.), please communicate the Diocesan protocol and safety measures during Phase 2-4.

Please post the Diocesan Visitor and Vendor POSTER supplied to all parishes at the entry(s) of the parish workplace.

CHAPTER NINE: EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

The following are some examples and directions of what to do on encountering a pandemic contagion situation such as potential contamination of a church or parish/diocesan office. The guiding rules for these situations are effective care and responsible safety. Do not forego one for the other. It is always better to exercise caution and safe practices in these circumstances.

In all cases, immediately consult Public Health Ontario for reporting requirements and assessment of the threat.

While considerations of privacy must be respected, a positive duty must be exercised to advise people who may have been exposed to viral contagion, and a further positive duty exists to remove any such threat and take measures to bring the parish back to a healthy state.

For issues that arise that are not listed here, please contact the Office of Bishop Miehm for direction and advice.

Pandemic Infection of Clergy or Staff

If a cleric or staff member is ill with COVID-19, notify the Office of the Bishop. Clergy and Staff must seek immediate medical attention and follow any direction to self-quarantine or otherwise isolate. Any restrictions related to quarantine or the isolation of a cleric or staff member must be communicated to the Office of the Bishop.

Clergy or Staff so affected may not return to work until they are provided with a letter from their physician advising that they no longer suffer from the virus.

Pandemic Infection of a Parishioner

If you are advised that a parishioner who attended Mass has been diagnosed with COVID-19, such information should be confirmed. Upon confirmation, a letter must be sent to the parishioner expressing care and advising them that until they are well, they must not attend the parish or parish office. Every effort should be made to follow-up on their health and express the pastoral care of the faith community.

Notice to Parishioners

Parishioners should be advised of the sickness of their parish priest or a parish staff member but they must not be named. If the parish is contacted by the Health Unit about a cleric, staff member or parishioner who has become ill, the parish will comply to the best of its ability with the information request.

CHAPTER TEN: COMMUNICATIONS

As the Diocese and parishes prepare to reopen administrative offices and parishes, effective communication is vital to ensure clergy, staff and the faithful have a clear understanding of plans, how and when plans are implemented and how to support one another. Each parish must ensure the timely and accurate dissemination of information to employees and parishioners during the pandemic period.

Messaging

Pray always.

Stay at home as much as possible.

Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly.

Observe physical distance.

Wear a face mask or face shield when physical distancing is not possible.

Connect with others virtually.

Say “thank you” to frontline staff and community workers.

Signage

At the Church Doors and Around the Church

SELF CARE CHECK-UP

Have you taken your temperature at home? Is your temperature normal?

Are you experiencing any of the following symptoms - coughing and wheezing, fatigue, loss of appetite, shortness of breath, excessive sputum, aching muscles, headaches, chills, confusion, runny nose and/or shaking?

Have you been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19?

Have you been out of the country or the province? If yes, did you observe the mandatory 14 day quarantine upon your return?

Are you awaiting test results from your own COVID-19 test?

ENTER

EXIT

Visiting the Office

- If you feel sick or your temperature is elevated, or you are experiencing any symptoms of illness, you are asked to refrain from entering the office.
- Only one person is to be admitted to the office at a time.
- Be sure to use the hand sanitizer before entering the work or worship space.
- Be sure to maintain a physical two-metre (six-foot) distance at all times; stand and sit only in the designated places.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Demonstrate physical care through elbow bumps, smiles, waves, etc. – touchless gestures of care!

Diocesan COVID-19 Visitor and Vendor Onsite Protocol

The Diocese and its parishes continue to comply with Federal and Provincial Legislative and Regulatory COVID-19 Guidelines. Every reasonable precaution has been and will continue to be taken by the Diocese and its parishes to protect the health and safety of those attending our locations.

- All Visitors and Vendors must sign in at the reception office and include contact information in the event contact tracing is required
- Must sign declaration that they are free of symptoms and have not been in contact with a COVID-19 patient
- During the Coronavirus pandemic, we ask that prior to entering our location, you ensure that your temperature is less than 37.5 degrees Celsius.
- Entrance is not permitted to those who are suffering from: cough, sputum production, shortness of breath, undue fatigue, loss of appetite, muscle aching, runny nose, chills involving shakes or loss of sense or taste or smell.
- You are strongly encouraged to wear a mask or face shield upon entry into our location.
- Please use hand the hand sanitizer at the entrance before entering our location.
- Follow marked pathways or signs, where applicable.
- At all times please maintain a distance of two-metre (six-foot) increments between you, your coworkers and staff when entering and exiting our locations.
- Please use the washroom in emergency or urgent situations only, you will be escorted by a staff member so that disinfecting can be completed after use.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: INSPECTIONS BY THE DIOCESE AND/OR CATHOLIC MUTUAL INSURERS OF CANADA

In order to provide assurance to the Government that Ontario Catholic churches will be abiding by best practices as are outlined in this manual, the diocese shall, from time to time, conduct inspections on an unannounced basis. Parishes that are non-compliant will be put on an improvement list with appropriate follow-up to ensure future compliance.

In addition, Catholic Mutual, in the course of its regular inspections, has indicated that they too will review parish churches for compliance issues and report to the diocesan office.

CHAPTER TWELVE: CHECKLISTS

ENTRANCE AND EXITING THE CHURCH/SEATING PEOPLE

Ushers

- All ushers should wear masks since it is difficult to maintain physical distancing and ushers should wear plastic gloves if holding a door.
- An usher captain should be designated at each Mass to ensure that all tasks are reviewed and performed.

Prior to Mass

- The Celebrant and all liturgical ministers should take their temperature in the rectory or in their homes before coming to Mass.
- The ushers must see to it that the number restrictions (Stage 2 – 30% of the building capacity) as per the provincial directives are not exceeded and that physical distancing is maintained.
- Review the floor and seat markings to see that they are all in good repair and order.
- Ensure that the crying room is closed.

Temperature Screening

- Post signage to remind people that they should take their temperature at home before coming to the church.

Entering and Exiting

- Ensure that entrance restriction notice signs are posted or otherwise situated in visible positions at each entrance to the church before every Mass and that the cautions on the signs are pointed out to people entering.
- To ensure that people entering are not mixed with people leaving, designate one doorway for entering and one for exiting. Ushers may assist by directing people to entrances or exits so that physical distancing is maintained.
- Parishioners must be reminded to maintain two-metre (six-foot) physical distancing upon entry and while exiting.
- If possible, one door should be designated for entry and a separate door for exiting so that parishioners do not cross paths as noted above.

- After dismissal, the usher will release the remainder of the parishioners exit row by row beginning at row nearest the exit.

Showing People to Their Seats

- Tape off pews so that there are 6 feet or two metres between them. This may be every second or third row. Measure it to ensure that there is a minimum of 6 feet/ 2 metres between pews for occupancy.
- Families/groups/individuals residing in the same household should be seated in pews together while maintaining 2 meters or 6 feet of space between them and the next household unit.
- Try to seat families in one area with plenty of space around them.

Collection

- Ensure that the locations of collection baskets are properly noted. The collection basket should be situated in proximity to the exit and if possible two persons should be assigned to safeguard the basket maintaining physical distancing while people are exiting.
- Encourage online, touchless ways of giving.

- **PRE-AUTHORIZED OFFERTORY PLAN**

- <https://www.peterboroughdiocese.org/en/get-involved/pre-authorized-offering-plan.aspx>

- **DONATE THROUGH THE PARISH WEBSITE**

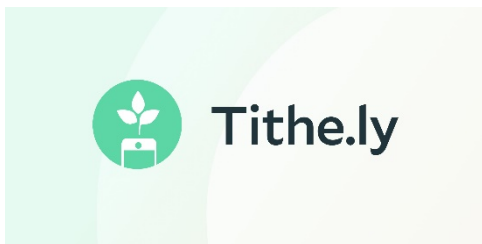
- Insert the parish weblink

- **DONATE THROUGH THE WEBSITE FOR THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PETERBOROUGH**

- <https://www.peterboroughdiocese.org/en/get-involved/donate.aspx>

- **TEXT TO DONATE**

- <https://get.tithe.ly/online-giving-for-churches>



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Communion

- Ushers must keep people distanced two-metre (six-foot) distance from each other and regulate the pace of the Communion procession.
- Each usher should remain two-metre (six-foot) distance away from persons they are directing.
- People should be directed by row to go up for Holy Communion by the centre aisle and return to their seat (pew) by the side aisle or as determined by the pastor.

Overflow Room

- Where the Local Ordinary has approved the use of the church/parish hall for overflow use, the parish hall seating is to be laid in a manner consistent with the social distancing norms being used in the main church. An usher should be present if an alternative area is opened.

Sick Parishioners

- Encourage parishioners who are ill to remain at home.

Traffic Flow

- Entrance and exit doors must be observed. People entering the church cannot be mixed with people leaving. In smaller churches, Ushers must coordinate traffic flow to maintain order. Some role of traffic cop might need to be considered to have people come in and out so as not to collide or violate the two-metre (six-foot) distance space rule.
- Place signs on doors for one entrance passage into the church and one exit passage from the church.
- Ushers must review the floor and seat markings to see that they are all in good repair and order.

CHURCH SPACING AND CLEANING

Custodial/Cleaning Staff or Volunteer Teams for Cleaning (“Cleaners”)

- Cleaners must see to it that all measuring aids to assist people with physical distancing are in place and in good order.
- Care and attention must be paid to ensuring that all floor and seat affixed tape are in good condition.

- Wastebaskets should be placed in the church for used tissues, masks and gloves and emptied after every Mass.
- Washrooms should be cleaned after every Mass. Care should be taken to make sure the instructions for safe and reliable hand washing techniques remain posted in a visible position.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers should be placed in proximity to all exits, all washrooms and in the sanctuary.
- Interior direction signs should be placed in obvious locations for the washroom, etc.
- Fonts should be emptied.
- Reconciliation Rooms should be cleaned after every confessional service. Screens and kneelers should be wiped.
- After every Mass, a disinfecting cloth should be run over all the pews, including the backs and sides where people's hands come in touch with them.
- If the church halls is approved as an overflow room, the hall should be cleaned in the same manner as the church proper. Chairs should be laid out at 2-metre (six-foot) distance intervals. Chairs should be wiped if they have been used in the previous 72 hours.
- If there is an approved overflow room, sound systems in halls should be checked to ensure that church services can be broadcast within them.

MASS AMENDMENTS

- Pre-Mass prayers may continue as long as appropriate spacing is used.
- Children's liturgy is suspended. Signage will be posted notifying parishioners at all entry points. Parents must be with their children at all times; a child cannot be permitted to wander.
- All persons in the sanctuary will maintain a two-metre (six-foot) distance apart.
- There will be no altar servers.
- All sacred vessels are to be placed on a small table adjacent to the altar to obviate the amount of handling and contact.
- Only one lector is assigned per Mass and is seated near the ambo.
- Singing at Mass is suspended. There may be instrumental music played without singing during the initial stages of reopening.

- The offertory baskets are not passed from one parishioner to another. The offertory baskets are placed in one location at the back or side of the church.
- The bread and wine are not brought forward in an Offertory Procession. The bread and wine are placed at the altar for the Celebrant.
- Deacons and priests must be 2 metres (6 feet) from each other at all times.
- The priest (and deacon) and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion must wash their hands before and after distributing Communion.
- Eucharistic ministers of Holy Communion are given a ciborium by the priest and return it to the priest after Communion. The priest alone transfers the remaining Eucharist to the tabernacle and places the remaining vessels on the table beside the altar.
- The priest and ministers of Holy Communion may not wear gloves or a mask for distributing Holy Communion.
- Holy Communion must be released carefully and reverently into the hands of the recipient so that there is no contact between the minister and the communicant.
- The priest (or lector) makes announcements after the Prayer after Communion.
- Before dismissal, the priest should remind the assembly about leaving the church at the direction of the ushers while observing appropriate physical distancing.

PRAYER IN TIME OF PANDEMIC COVID-19



POPE FRANCIS OFFERS A PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY FOR PROTECTION FROM COVID-19

"O Mary, you shine continuously along our journey as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who at the Cross was near to the pain of Jesus, keeping your faith firm.

You, Salvation of the Roman people, know what we need, and we trust that you will provide for those needs so that, as at Cana of Galilee, joy and celebration may return after this moment of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the will of the Father and to do what Jesus tells us, He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and took up our sorrows to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection.

We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God. Do not despise our pleas – we who are put to the test – and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin. Through Christ our Lord, Amen."