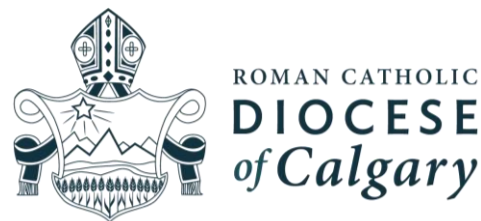


MEMORANDUM



DATE November 26, 2020

TO Clergy and Parish Office Staff

FROM Rev. Wilbert Chin Jon

SUBJECT REVISED New Mandatory Restrictions – State of Public Health Emergency

Due to a state of public health emergency which has been declared by the Province, the following are mandatory restrictions that apply to the Diocese and the parishes effective immediately.

All parishes under the Diocese of Calgary are expected to comply with these restrictions, even in municipalities that currently do not fall under the list of *communities under enhanced status*.

Current health and safety measures in the Diocese remain in place unless otherwise indicated by the following new restrictions which must be observed in our churches and offices.

Note: *Lines that are italicized are from the Government of Alberta.*

- The total maximum attendance allowed for Mass is limited to 1/3 of regular pre-COVID capacity or less if required for proper physical distancing.
 - *Must hold services at their normal location, including rental spaces like a community hall.*
 - It is advised that parishes do not use the parish hall as an overflow to increase the capacity at this time.
- The maximum number of attendees for baptisms, weddings and funeral Masses and services is 10.
 - This also applies to Masses for the Dead, i.e. “Memorial Masses,” as these involve families.
 - *This includes the officiant, bride/groom and witnesses.*
 - For funerals and baptisms, the Diocese of Calgary does not consider the officiant as one of the 10 guests allowed.
 - Priests must always wear masks when meeting with the family for funeral preparation and with couples preparing for marriage. Proper physical distancing must always be observed.
 - *This does not include staff or organizers who are not considered an invited guest.*
 - For funerals and weddings, instrumentalists and soloists fall under staff. Funeral Directors are staff.
 - *This applies to any facility, including places of worship and funeral homes.*
 - *This includes services held indoors or outdoors, seated or non-seated.*

- *Receptions are not permitted.*
 - This especially applies to parish halls that offer hall rentals.
- **Mask use is mandatory for everyone who enters our churches and offices.**
 - Mask use is mandatory for all the faithful. Parishioners who are not able to wear a mask for medical reasons can be exempt from this regulation except when receiving Holy Communion. All parishioners must wear masks when lining up for the distribution of Holy Communion, including those receiving a “blessing.”
 - Proof of eligibility for exemption is not required when entering the church without a mask, however, we should remind everyone to wear a mask as they enter since they may have just forgotten to put them on.
 - Faith leaders and others speaking in front of a congregation are permitted to remove their masks while speaking provided they maintain 2 metre distance from others while doing so. Once finished speaking, the speaker must put on their mask again.
 - The only addition to the current mask use practise for priests and deacons is that mask must be worn while seated and/or while not speaking.
 - When the priest or deacon has touched the mask at any time during the Liturgy of the Eucharist, hands must be sanitized.
 - *Masks are mandatory in all indoor workplaces, except when working alone in an office or a safely distanced cubicle or an appropriate barrier is in place.*
 - *This applies to all employees, visitors, delivery personnel and contractors.*
 - *This includes all locations where employees are present and masks won't pose a safety risk.*
 - *Working from home should be considered, where possible.*
- **No indoor social gatherings are permitted in any setting (private homes, public spaces or workplaces).**
 - *Social gatherings are where people:*
 - *move freely to mix with others*
 - *have two-way conversations*
 - *share food, laugh, play games*
 - *Examples of social gatherings include:*
 - *wedding or funeral receptions*
 - *induction or award ceremonies*
 - *luncheons or potlucks*
 - *parties: birthday, retirement, baby showers, house/backyard*
 - *Indoor close contacts must be limited to people in the same household.*
 - *Work and support group meetings are not social gatherings, but attendance should be limited and public health measures followed.*
 - *This does not apply to service visits from caregivers, health or child care providers.*
 - *In-person faith group meetings and other religious gatherings are not permitted in private homes while these measures are in effect.*
 - *In-person faith group meetings can continue but must maintain physical distancing and public health measures must be followed.*

- The in-person format for **baptismal preparation** is suspended at this time as these involve families. The parish should consider offering an online format of delivery or encourage them to enrol in the online course offered by Ascension Press. <https://ascensionpress.com/products/belonging-baptism-in-the-family-of-god-certification-course>. Enrolment cost is \$9.95 US per family. The family will be given a certificate to show that they have completed the program.
- The in-person format for **sacrament preparation** for children and youth is suspended at this time as these involve families. Instead, the parish should consider offering an online format of delivery. Portal for parish offices: <https://www.catholicyc.ca/preparation.html>.
- The Diocese of Calgary at this time has chosen to suspend in-person sessions for the RCIA. We ask that parishes offer an online format for meeting.
- Lay associations are not allowed to gather in parish facilities at this time. They should use an online format for meeting and programs.
- **Outdoor social gatherings are limited to 10 people and must not have an indoor component.**
 - Backyard gatherings that require movement in/out of homes are not permitted.
 - Attendees should remain distanced at all times and follow public health measures
- **Festivals and events are prohibited (indoors and outdoors).**
 - Only liturgies are allowed while observing the mandatory restrictions.

Added Notes

- **Celebrants, Concelebrants, & Deacons**
 - Only the celebrant partakes of the Precious Blood from the chalice. Only the celebrant can drink from any chalice.
 - A separate chalice is provided whenever there is a concelebrant or a group of concelebrants. They are not to sip from the chalice but instead must self-intinct. Concelebrants are obliged to partake of the Precious Blood.
 - The celebrant will be responsible for the purification of the vessels.
 - Deacons are only given the host. They are not obliged to receive of the Precious Blood.
 - Self-intinction is reserved for priests only.
- **First Reconciliation** – The celebration of the Sacrament of Penance must take place in a well-ventilated area. Every family should be seated and separated from other families at least 6 feet away from each other while waiting for their turn. At this time, we ask that we limit the people in the area 10 people at a time. The Confessor is not to be counted as one of the 10.
- **Penitential Services** – It is highly recommend that parishes do not offer a penitential service similar to pre-COVID days where large numbers of people gather in the church. Instead, we recommend that confessions be made more readily available and much more frequently.
- **Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament** – This liturgy can only be held in the nave of the church. The total maximum attendance allowed for Mass is limited to 1/3 of regular pre-COVID capacity or less if required for proper physical distancing.
- **Funeral Vigils & Viewings** – The priest or deacon is advised to only have 10 in attendance of the immediate family and friends in the funeral home for the funeral vigil. Some families may

arrange for a rotational viewing to take place with 10 individuals present at a time. Priests and deacons are advised not to remain for the viewing once the vigil service has concluded.

- **Interments and Graveside Services** – The maximum number of attendees is 10. *This does not include staff or organizers who are not considered an invited guest.*
- **House Blessings** – At this time, entering homes for house blessings is discouraged. It is recommended that the priest or deacon bless the house from the outside or schedule the blessing at a later time.
- **Christmas Food Hampers** – The Diocese of Calgary will recommend to St. Vincent de Paul Society and other similar lay associations that food hampers be assembled in homes by the people in the same household. Parish facilities should not be used for the assembly of these hampers. Curbside drop-off and pickup are strongly recommended either in the parish parking lot or at the address of the recipients. Please continue to support charitable initiatives but avoid any form of gathering at this time.
- **The Use of Parish Halls for Christmas Masses** – Guidance on this matter will be provided before December 17, 2020.

For more information:

Enhanced Public Health Measures

<https://www.alberta.ca/enhanced-public-health-measures.aspx>

Resources for the Reintroduction of the Public Celebration of Holy Mass

<https://www.catholicyc.ca/resources.html>