



DIOCESE OF
LONDON
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

1070 WATERLOO STREET
LONDON, ONTARIO N6A 3Y2
CANADA
519-433-0658
FAX: 519-266-4353

18 October 2021

To: The Priests, Deacons, Lay Ecclesial Ministers, All Staff Working in our Diocesan Offices,
Volunteers in our Diocese, and All The Faithful

Since March 2020, doctors, scientists and other researchers around the world have worked as quickly and diligently as possible to find vaccines that would fight the novel coronavirus. While it is not proven that the vaccines will completely stop the virus or prevent a person from getting it, nevertheless, the current vaccines have been found to stop the worst effects of the virus. One way to ensure the efficacy of the vaccines is to have the greatest number of people vaccinated so that variants may not continue to appear and spread.

In my recent letter, dated 29 September 2021, I stated that our Diocese encourages all people who can be vaccinated to be vaccinated. We want to contribute to the efforts in the wider community to get as many as possible vaccinated to help stop the spread of COVID-19 and return to our normal way of life, including religious services. The attached Policy for the Diocese of London is work related and ministry related; it does not require those who attend religious services in our churches to be vaccinated.

As a Diocese, we are committed to providing safe places for our parishioners to come to worship, celebrate the sacramental life of the Church, and to be strengthened in their work as disciples making disciples for Jesus. We are committed, at the same time, to providing safe workplaces and meeting spaces in our parishes and offices across the Diocese. Vaccinations will make it possible to do ministry in hospitals, long-term care homes, homes for seniors and any place where home-bound parishioners live, along with schools and community centres, since getting a vaccination helps protect our most vulnerable.

I know that some are hesitant to receive the vaccine, yet I am issuing this Policy for the sake of the common good. As Pope Francis says, "In any case, from the ethical point of view, the morality of vaccination depends not only on the duty to protect one's own health, but also on the duty to pursue the common good."

Pope Francis states: "Being vaccinated with vaccines authorized by the competent authorities is an act of love. And contributing to ensure the majority of people are vaccinated is an act of love." He added: "[E]ach one of us can make his or her own small gesture of love. ... No matter how small, love is always grand. Small gestures for a better future" (18 August 2021). I ask you to consider these words of our Holy Father, particularly those who are hesitant to receive the vaccine.

Throughout the Policy there are references to the "Bishop's Designate" who oversees certain aspects of the implementation. For the purposes of the Policy and for the foreseeable future, I am appointing Father John Comiskey, Moderator of the Curia, to be the Bishop's Designate.

In light of my recent letter on the teaching of the Church on this subject, and those reasons briefly iterated above, I hereby decree that the attached policy on vaccinations comes into effect this day, on which I attach my signature and diocesan seal, 18 October 2021.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Ronald P. Fabbro, CSB
Bishop of London