

# WORSHIP SAFE

Directives Concerning Church Operations

Pandemic and Epidemic  
Emergency Situations



ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF KINGSTON

Please review these directives carefully.  
Questions should be directed to the Chancery Office.

THIS BOOKLET SHOULD BE RETAINED FOR FUTURE REFERENCE.

June 12, 2020

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# Archdiocese of Kingston

June 12, 2020

My brother Priests and Deacons:

As Premier Ford has announced the opening of Churches at 30 percent capacity, our work of preparation now begins in earnest. This booklet contains the guidelines and recommendations for the Parishes of the Archdiocese of Kingston. It is based on the document which the Ontario Bishops have compiled after consulting experts in the field of medicine, insurance and safety, as well as the Provincial Government.

It is important for you to know the philosophy or the rationale for this document. By law we must practise due diligence, by applying a standard of care for public places with a degree of reasonableness. The standard of care is to ensure that people are as safe as possible. While we cannot have absolutely perfection, we do need to take reasonable steps. We cannot guarantee people will not get sick, but we will do what is possible to minimize risk.

Our first concern must be for our own health in order that we do not spread the coronavirus ourselves. Our second concern is for the liturgical and other ministers who will participate in our celebrations, especially those giving Communion. Thirdly, we must ensure that our church buildings are safe, clean, and sanitized. Most of these guidelines are recommendations. They are highly recommended, but only you, as the parish priest, can determine what is necessary and appropriate in your situation. There is one mandatory norm: **Priests and Deacons exercising public ministry in the Archdiocese must take and record their temperature and advise the Ministers of Communion to do the same.** If any priest has an elevated temperature, he must not celebrate Mass.

Since it appears that a prolonged contact with others is the prime way the covid-19 virus is spread, I highly recommend that we limit the celebration of the Eucharist to 20 or 30 minutes. For this reason, I authorize the following changes to the celebration of the Sunday Eucharist and Solemnities which are celebrated with the people in Phase Two.

- 1) The priest may choose only one reading to be read before the Gospel.
- 2) The *Glory to God* and the Creed may be omitted.
- 3) Only a few petitions should be included for the Prayer of the Faithful.
- 4) The Homily should be concise and to the point (3 or 4 minutes)
- 5) You may wish to use the Third Penitential Act rather than the “I confess”, since it reduces the amount of words spoken by the people.
- 6) In order to facilitate the orderly exiting out of the Church and primarily to avoid logistical problems in giving Communion, while observing safe distancing, I recommend that Communion be distributed after the Blessing and at the exits to the church as people leave. In place of the Dismissal, the Priest or Deacon would say: “Let us bless the Lord.”

## **Ushers and Ministers of Hospitality**

Since we can only accommodate 30 percent of the church's capacity, it will be important to have selected men and women who will help with crowd control. These ushers or ministers of hospitality will be needed in four areas: 1) at the entrance of the Church to ensure people sanitize their hands and to direct the flow of people for Communion; 2) to direct parishioners to the place where they will sit and to direct them, row by row, starting from the rear of the church to exit and receive Communion; 3) to monitor the washrooms; and 4) to monitor the collection baskets.

### **Organizational Details**

1. Each church and office shall designate a minimum of two persons who shall coordinate the fulfillment and enforcement of all guidelines and directives outlined. 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.
2. Where possible and weather permitting, it is recommended that the doors of the church be opened to avoid contact with handles. If this is not possible, ushers, wearing masks and disposable gloves, should assist.
3. The most difficult task will be for you to determine how to implement "Capacity Control". You will have to face the challenge of determining who can attend Mass and how to regulate the numbers.
4. The second challenge is how to clean all surfaces which have come in contact with parishioners during Mass. If the next Mass is at least 72 hours later, you do not have to do anything. Otherwise the Church must be sanitized. The same applies for people entering the church for prayer at any time.
5. For the celebration of Mass, the Priest and liturgical ministers are not to wear gloves or a mask.
6. The celebration of the Children's Liturgy of the Word is not permitted during the pandemic.
7. Parishioners attending at Mass are advised to not sing on account of the potential spreading of airborne contagion. The priest himself is not to sing any parts of the Mass.

You will find further details about the celebration of the Eucharist in these Guidelines. You will also find detail descriptions for the liturgical ministers.

I want to thank you for patience and diligence. Our delay in opening our churches is to ensure the safety of our parishioners. As I mentioned in my letter to you on Tuesday, June 9, I hope our opening can gradual. First, the opening our churches for private prayer, then the celebration of weekday Masses, and finally the celebration of the Sunday Mass. The celebration of the sacraments and opening of our parish offices will follow afterward.

Fraternally,

+Michael Mulhall

Archbishop of Kingston

# SECTION ONE

## 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.

In order for the guidelines to be effective, all clergy and pastoral liturgical ministers must first have a basic understanding of how viruses form and how they are transmitted in order to take effective measures against them. Secondly, they must have the ability and discipline to put recommended and mandatory measures into effect, knowing that these measures may be a matter of life and death. Thirdly, they 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 physical and spiritual well-being at heart.

### **Personal Hygiene**

Personal hygiene is fundamental in reducing the risk of infection. While personal hygiene does not guarantee that one will avoid being infected, it greatly reduces one's exposure and ability to transmit contagion to others.

Personal hygiene extends to church facilities. The premises must be regularly cleaned and maintained so that opportunities for the transmission of disease are lessened for those who use them.

## SECTION TWO

# BASIC RULES APPLICABLE TO CHURCHES

### **General Rules**

Prior to the opening of churches and adjacent facilities, the following rules must be implemented in all Catholic churches, and where applicable, all parish halls and offices where the public may attend.

### **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 a two-metre (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.

### **Cleaning of Churches and Related Facilities**

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 sanitizing agent after each event.

If the church is open during the day for private prayer or for liturgies with small groups, there must be someone there to supervise. 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-metre (six-foot) radius is to be thoroughly cleaned before it can be used again.

### **Washrooms**

Church washrooms are to be restricted to use when absolutely necessary. No more than one person/family (living at the same address) at a time should use a washroom. Notices to this effect are to be posted outside the washroom. Hand washing signs are also to be placed in the washroom.

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.

### **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”.

### **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 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.

### **Holy Water Fonts**

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

### **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.

## **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.

### **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.

### **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.

Disinfectant hand sanitizer must be in place at the entrances and in the sanctuary.

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

### **Hymnals, Prayer Books, Envelopes**

All hymnals, prayer books and other papers are to be removed from the pews during the pandemic.

## **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.

## **Seating**

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

## **Floors and Aisles**

In high traffic areas (entrances and aisles) tape must be used to designate spacing of two-metre (six-foot) increments and to 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-metre (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.

## **Crying Rooms and Small Chapels/Devotional Areas**

Unless it is possible to ensure a two-metre (six-foot) distancing, 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.

## **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. Where physical distancing cannot be achieved, an impermeable screen is to be placed between the penitent and priest. The door handle/ The screen is to be cleaned with disinfectant between each confession.



# SECTION THREE

## BLUEPRINT FOR THE CELEBRATION OF SUNDAY MASS IN PHASE 2

Since it appears that a prolonged contact with others is the prime way the covid-19 virus is spread, it is highly recommended that the celebration of the Eucharist be limited to 20 or 30 minutes during Phase 2.

### **Preparations**

- Ushers need to be in place before people arrive for Mass.
- In addition to all that is needed for the Eucharist, hand sanitizer should be placed in the sanctuary area or credence table to be used by the Priest and Communion Ministers before and after distributing Holy Communion.
- Baskets may be placed at the entrances to the church to receive the monetary offerings of the people, at the beginning or at the end of Mass. Ushers should monitor the collection baskets and place them in a secure location during Mass; otherwise, the offering is collected at the end of Mass.
- A small table should be placed behind the altar with the wine and water, the chalice and vessels with the hosts for the people as well the missal and what is needed for the washing of hands.
- If there is no Deacon and the Book of Gospels is used, it is placed on the altar before Mass.

### **Entrance Procession**

- The entrance procession takes place directly from the sacristy. The Communion Ministers and the Lector should already be in place.
- The Cantor may sing the entrance antiphon or a short hymn.
- It is recommended that only the Priest and Deacon and possibly a single Server participate in the procession. A Server may carry the processional cross.

### **The Introductory Rites**

- The Priest leads the Introductory Rites in the usual manner from the chair. He should use a simple lectern for the prayers rather than have a Server hold the book.
- The Third Penitential Act is recommended and the *Glory to God* may be omitted.

### **Liturgy of the Word**

- One reading (either First or Second Reading) may be proclaimed. Only one Lector proclaims the Scripture reading and possibly the psalm from the Lectionary.
- The Psalm may be sung, but it is suggested that it is recited by the Cantor or Lector at another lectern, since the people are encouraged not to sing.
- The Gospel Acclamation may be sung, but this is not recommended.
- No candles or incense are used for the Gospel.
- The Homily may be given at the ambo or at the chair. It is recommended that it be concise and to the point (3 or 4 minutes).

- The Priest leads the Prayers of the Faithful from the chair. The Priest or the Deacon or the Lector announces the petitions. The intentions should be few and concisely worded.

### **Preparation of the Altar and Offerings**

- No collection is taken up at this time. The collection is to be received at the doors of the church at the beginning or at the end of Mass before people receive Communion.
- There is no procession of the bread and wine. The bread and wine are placed on the credence table or table near the altar before Mass.

### **Eucharistic Prayer**

- During the Eucharistic Prayer whenever the Priest is praying with hands joined, it is important that his hands not be near his face.
- It is recommended that the Eucharistic Acclamations not be sung. If any are sung, it should be the “Amen.”
- The ciboria containing hosts for the people should be placed at some distance from the Priest’s chalice and paten. If the ciboria have covers, these may remain in place during the Eucharistic Prayer.
- A Server may ring the bell at the appropriate times.

### **Communion Rite**

- Parishioners are not to hold hands during the Lord’s Prayer.
- 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.
- After the Priest receives Communion, he gives Communion to those in the sanctuary. The Deacon, at this time, does not receive from the Chalice. Concelebrants are to receive Holy Communion by intinction.
- After a short time of silence, the Priest says the Prayer after Communion at the Altar.

### **Concluding Rite**

- The concluding rite takes place in this way.
- Any necessary announcements may be made before the Blessing.
  - In particular, people are to be reminded to wait for the Priest and Communion Ministers to take their places at the doors of the church. Then to follow the directions of the Ushers to leave their seats starting from the back
  - They may also 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.
- The Priest gives the Blessing at the altar, and he or the Deacon adds: “Let us bless the Lord.” The people respond: “Thanks be to God.”

## **Communion**

- After the Prayer after Communion or Announcements, the Communion Ministers approach the altar. The Cantor begins the Communion hymn and the Priest gives Communion to the Communion Ministers, then gives a ciborium to the Deacon and/or Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, and together they proceed to the door(s) of the church.
- The dialogue between the Communion Minister and the communicant occurs at a two-metre (six-foot) physical distance. After responding “Amen”, the communicant approaches the Communion Minister who carefully places the Body of Christ in the communicant’s hand without touching the person. The Priest or Communion Minister should have a table beside them with a bowl of sanitizer and a cloth in case the communicant is touched.
- It is strongly recommended that 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, those wishing to receive on the tongue should receive Communion after all others. The Priest or Communion Minister should sanitize their fingers in case the tongue or face of the communicant is touched.
- All ministers of Holy Communion are to sanitize their hands before and after distributing the Eucharist.
- The ciboria are returned to the Tabernacle afterward, and the Sacred Vessels are purified by the Priest.
- The Sacred Vessels must be washed with soap and warm water after the Mass.

# SECTION FOUR

## LITURGICAL MINISTRIES AT THE EUCHARIST

### **Deacon**

A Deacon exercising ministry during the Mass (or any other Sacraments) should undergo a temperature check prior to entering the church. If his temperature is at or above (>37.8 C oral or >37.5 C forehead) or they show ANY compatible symptoms, he must not enter the church and is asked to seek medical help. If the Deacon has an elevated temperature, he should not come to Mass.

### **Preparations**

- All sacred vessels are to be placed on a small table adjacent to the altar to obviate the amount of handling and people contact with Servers.
- It is recommended that only the Priest, a Deacon and possibly a single Server participate in the procession.
- The Book of Gospels may be carried by the Deacon or placed on the altar before Mass.

### **Celebration of the Eucharist**

- The Deacon must remain two metres (six feet) from the Priest at all times.
- If there is a Book of Gospel, then following the reading, the Lector removes the Lectionary so that the Deacon can proclaim the Gospel. The petitions may be announced by the Deacon or Lector at the ambo or by the Priest at the chair.
- The Deacon proclaims the Gospel, and from time to time the Homily. No candles or incense are carried.
- The Deacon, at Communion time, does not receive from the Chalice.
- The Priest and Deacon and extraordinary Ministers of Communion must sanitize their hands before and after distributing Communion.
- The Priest, Deacon and Ministers of Communion may not wear gloves or a mask for distributing Holy Communion.

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## Lector

A Lector exercising ministry during the Mass (or any other Sacraments) should undergo a temperature check prior to entering the church. If the individual's temperature is at or above (>37.8 C oral or >37.5 C forehead) or they show ANY compatible symptoms, they must not enter the church and are asked to seek medical help.

- Only one Lector is assigned per Mass and is seated near the ambo.
- A Lector should not wear a gown that has worn by another person.
- Lectors are to sanitize their hands before Mass.

### Entrance Procession

- It is recommended that only the Priest, Deacon and possibly a single Server participate in the procession. The Lectionary is placed at the Ambo before Mass and the Book of Gospels, on the altar before Mass.

### The Liturgy of the Word

- It is recommended that there be only one reading before the Gospel. In order to minimize contact with the Lectionary, it is recommended that only one Lector proclaim the Scripture reading and possibly the psalm from the Lectionary already placed on the ambo.
- The Psalm may be sung or read by the Cantor (at another lectern) or by Lector. If there is a Book of Gospels, then the Lector removes the Lectionary, otherwise the Lectionary is left in place.
- The petitions may be announced by the Deacon or Lector at the ambo or by the Priest at the chair.

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## Servers

Servers exercising ministry during the Mass (or any other Sacraments) should undergo a temperature check prior to entering the church. If the individual's temperature is at or above (>37.8 C oral or >37.5 C forehead) or they show ANY compatible symptoms, they must not enter the church and are asked to seek medical help.

- It is recommended that only a single Server participate in the celebration.
- Servers are to sanitize their hands before Mass.
- A Server should not wear a gown that has been worn by another person.
- A Server may carry the processional cross and ring the altar bells at the appropriate times.
- The Priest should use a simple lectern for the prayers rather than have a Server hold the book.
- All sacred vessels are to be placed on a small table adjacent to the altar to obviate the amount of handling and people contact with Servers.

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# Cantor and Musicians

Musicians exercising ministry during the Mass (or any other Sacraments) should undergo a temperature check prior to entering the church. If the individual's temperature is at or above (>37.8 C oral or >37.5 C forehead) or they show ANY compatible symptoms, they must not enter the church and are asked to seek medical help.

- Musicians are to sanitize their hands before Mass.
- A Cantor (accompanied by a single instrumentalist) may sing at Mass as long as the Cantor is a minimum of ten feet (three metres) distant from anyone else while singing.
- In a church where physical distancing can be ensured between choir members, then such a choir is possible but only if the choir members are a minimum of ten feet (three metres) from one another and any other person in the Church.
- Musical instruments and microphones should be sanitized after the celebration.

## Introductory Rite

- The Cantor may sing the entrance antiphon or an entrance hymn. The music should cover the entrance procession. Since the people should not sing, the hymn should not be prolonged.
- While normally sung, the *Glory to God* is omitted during Phase 2.

## The Liturgy of the Word

- It is recommended that there be one reading before the Gospel.
- The Psalm and Gospel Acclamation are sung by the Cantor at a place other than the ambo. Although it may be better to recite the Psalm as the people are encouraged not to sing.

## The Liturgy of the Eucharist

- It is recommended that the Eucharistic Acclamations are not sung. If any are sung, it should be the "Amen". The Lamb of God may be sung.
- A hymn or instrumental music is sung or played during the Preparation of the altar. There is no collection.
- In place of the Recessional Hymn, a Communion hymn is sung. Communion will be given after the Blessing at the doors of the Church.

## Ministers of Communion: Ordinary and Extra-ordinary

Ministers of Communion exercising ministry during the Mass should undergo a temperature check prior to entering the church. If the individual's temperature is at or above (>37.8 C oral or >37.5 C forehead) or they show ANY compatible symptoms, they must not enter the church and are asked to seek medical help.

- All ministers of Holy Communion are to sanitize their hands before Mass and before distributing the Eucharist.
- The Ministers of Communion may not wear gloves or a mask for distributing Holy Communion. They should not wear a gown that has worn by another person.
- The Communion Ministers take their places before Mass begins. They do not participate in the Entrance Procession.
- After the Prayer after Communion or Announcements, the Communion Ministers approach the altar. The Cantor begins the Communion hymn and the Priest gives Communion to the Communion Ministers, then gives a ciborium to the Deacon and/or Extraordinary Ministers of Communion, and together they proceed to the door(s) of the church.
- The dialogue between the Eucharistic Minister and communicant occurs at a two-metre (six-foot) 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.
- 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 Communion Minister should have a table beside them with a bowl containing liquid sanitizer and a cloth to dry their hand in case the communicant is touched.
- It is strongly recommended that 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, those wishing to receive on the tongue should receive Communion after all others. The Priest or Communion Minister should sanitize their fingers in case the tongue or face of the communicant is touched.
- The ciboria are returned to the Tabernacle afterward.
- After Mass the Sacred Vessel must be washed with soap and warm water after the Priest has purified them

# Ushers

Ushers and Ministers of hospitality exercising ministries during the Mass (or any other Sacraments) should undergo a temperature check prior to entering the church. If the individual's temperature is at or above (>37.8 C oral or >37.5 C forehead) or they show ANY compatible symptoms, they must not enter the church and are asked to seek medical help.

- All Ushers should wear disposable gloves and masks, which will be provided by the church.
- An Usher captain should be designated at each Mass to ensure that all tasks are reviewed and performed.
- Ushers are needed 1) at the church entrance; 2) to assist with the seating of parishioners and Communion procession at the end of Mass; 3) near the washrooms; 4) to monitor the collection baskets; 5) in some cases in the parking lot.

## 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.
- Ensure that the locations of collection baskets are properly noted and direct people to them to deposit their collection. The collection baskets 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.

## 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.
- 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.
- Ensure that people entering are not mixed with people leaving and that where possible each group use doorways designated for entering and exiting. Ushers may assist by directing people so that physical distancing is maintained.

## Showing People to Their Seats

- Families residing in the same household and individuals should be seated in pews so that there is two metres (six feet) of space between them and next person/family seated.
- Try to seat families in one area with plenty of space for them.
- Remember to skip uneven rows to ensure a two-metre (six-foot) distance is met.
- 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.



### **Communion and Exiting**

- Communion will take place after the Blessing and at the exits of the church. When the Priest and Communion Ministers are in place near the doors, the ushers will signal the parishioners to approach the Communion Minister(s), beginning with the row nearest the exit. Parishioners must be reminded to maintain two-metre (six-foot) physical distancing. The Parishioners then exit the Church after receiving Communion.

### **Washrooms**

- Check washroom after each use that all is in order and that it has been sanitized.

### **Sick Parishioners**

- If an usher notices that someone is demonstrating visible signs of COVID 19 including, but not limited to cough, dizziness, fatigue, shortness of breath, aching muscles, confusion – that person and any related parishioner should be asked to leave and seek medical treatment in a tactful way. The usher should not attempt to lift or help the parishioner in any way. If the parishioner is too sick to move, the paramedics should be called at 911.

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## **Monetary Collection Counters**

- After Mass the collection should be quarantined for at least 72 hours (3 days).
- Counters must wear gloves while counting the monetary offerings.
- There should be at least two people involved. Diocesan Screening Guidelines should be followed.

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## SECTION FIVE GUIDELINES FOR GOD’S PEOPLE RETURNING TO CHURCH

As we prepare to re-open churches, please be aware of the following guidelines. We recognize that they may be awkward/uncomfortable and contrary to our culture of hospitality and community. In working to foster a safe environment for all, we thank you in advance for your patience and co-operation.

Churches are limited to a 30 percent capacity. This means Parishes may have to limit the number of people attending Mass.

### **Before coming to church:**

Please care for your own health. Anyone attending any liturgical celebration does so at their own risk.

Please check temperature of all family members before coming to church. If any family members have a fever, please remain home for the health and safety of all. Consult your family doctor.

If you exhibit any of the following symptoms, please remain home at this time - cough, fatigue, loss of appetite, shortness of breath, muscle aches, loss of taste or smell, headache, runny nose, sore throat, chills with shakes.

Attendees and volunteers from demographic groups that are at a great risk of serious illness, such as people 65 years of age or older and individuals with chronic medical conditions, are encouraged to stay safe by avoiding public gatherings, but not prohibited from attending these liturgical celebrations if they so choose.

The use of masks and face coverings are recommended but not mandatory at this time. Parishioners must provide their own masks or face coverings.

### **Arriving at church**

Maintain physical distancing at all times – two metres (six feet) from others – in the parking lot, church entrance and in church itself.

Upon arrival, put on mask/face covering before entering church.

Parishes will likely be using one entrance only – it may not be the entrance you are familiar with. Follow direction of volunteers, signage as appropriate.

Sanitize hands upon entry and regularly wherever possible.

Pews and aisles will be marked to note physical distancing requirements. Most likely, every second row of pews will be left empty. You will not be able to sit where you wish or where you normally do. Families and households living at the same residence may sit together; the same two metres (six feet) distance should be maintained concerning others. Follow direction of ushers for seating.

Pews will be emptied of prayer books, hymnals, etc. You may bring your own missal or prayer book, as long as you take it home with you.

Parish bulletins will not be published at this time.

Holy Water fonts will be empty and not in use at this time.

If your church hall is used for overflow purposes, it will also be marked for physical distancing – same guidelines apply.

### **Celebration of the Eucharist**

Please listen carefully to announcements before the start of Mass. Follow directions as advised.

Altar Servers, Lectors will be kept to an absolute minimum during this period of time. Please do not enter the sacristy unless you have been asked to assist during Mass.

Other than a Cantor or choir appropriately physically distanced, there will be no singing at Mass until further notice.

There will be no offertory procession or collection. Please leave donation in the designated basket upon entry/departure as directed.

Please do not hold hands or shake hands during any portion of the celebration of the Eucharist. At the Sign of Peace, a nod or bow to others is appropriate.

If a mask/face covering is worn during the Mass, it should be removed prior to reception of Holy Communion and may be put back on after consumption.

During this time of pandemic and under the guidance of local medical health officials, the faithful are asked to receive Holy Communion in the hand by placing one on top of the other, allowing the Eucharistic Minister to safely place the Body of Christ in one's hand without contact. Since each communicant has the right to receive Communion either on the tongue or in the hand, those wishing to receive on the tongue should receive Communion after all others. The Priest or Communion Minister should sanitize their fingers in case the tongue or face of the communicant is touched.

Follow the directions of the ushers for the Communion flow, ensuring physical distancing at all times.

Follow direction provided for dismissal and departure – exits may be different than those you are accustomed to.

Following Mass, please depart the church so that cleaning may commence. While it is our nature to congregate/socialize in the foyer or parking lot, we ask you NOT to do so at this time. Please maintain physical distancing.

### **General**

If you suddenly feel ill, start coughing or sneezing, please leave the church for the health and safety of others gathered.

Children's ministry, prayers groups and other ministries that gather in the church/church grounds are either suspended or operating virtually only at this time.

Please use washrooms only if absolutely necessary. One person or family at a time should be in the washroom. Ensure that all wash their hands with warm, soapy water after using washroom facilities. Please respect physical distancing outside the washroom.

If, within 14 days of attending Mass, you learn that you or someone in your family who attended Mass with you has tested positive for COVID-19, you are asked to: a) contact the Ontario Public Health Authority; and, b) contact the parish office. Your identity will not be revealed to anyone other than the Public Health Authority, and only to ensure that any spread is contained.

## SECTION SIX SAFETY SUPPLY PLAN

Each church will receive a pre-packaged kit (2 zip lock bags) labelled with their church name containing enough supplies to get them through the first 1-2 weeks (see list of box contents below). For efficiency purposes the contents of each box is the same. After some experience with the safety practices and supplies used, the type and quantities of supplies can be adjusted for a church. Churches are encouraged to NOT discard the empty bottles and spray heads. These are in high demand right now.

The kits will be delivered by Levac Safety Supply to Our Lady of Lourdes Church for pickup by priests at their meeting on Friday, June 12th.

- The Pastoral Centre will pay for the entire shipment with an allocation to parishes to be determined at a later date.
- Each church will monitor their usage of supplies and report to the Pastoral Centre any adjustments needed for the next delivery.
- Only unused supplies where the package seal has not been broken may be returnable to Levac Safety Supply.

### **Box Contents:**

- Masks – Procedural grade (L2) - One box (50 masks)
- Hand sanitizer - Hydra Pure - Four 250 ml pump bottles and One 700 ml refill bottle
- Thermometre – One no touch forehead model (may not be available for first delivery)
- Gloves – One box of disposable nitrile gloves 5.3 mil black powder free (50 pairs)
- Cleaner - Lloyds disinfectant (furniture safe) - 1L bottle and 2 rolls of paper towel and graphics for hand washing, etc.
- Disinfectant wipes – One Lysol canister (80 wipes)
- Signage – 2 laminated hand washing signs and 1 each of Physical distancing & cleaning/disinfecting public spaces.