



Diocese of Saint John
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January 19, 2021

Dear priests and faithful of the Diocese of Saint John,

The Province of New Brunswick has moved Zones 2 and 3 (Saint John and Fredericton Regions) into the “Red Level” of the province’s recovery plan. In the “Red Level” public Masses are to be celebrated outside only. Please see the attached Diocesan protocols, as well as the latest GNB mandatory order, with special attention given to article 32(e). Be assured that the dispensation from the Holy Obligation to attend Mass on Sunday is still in effect.

Over the past few months our clergy, staff and parish volunteers have worked diligently to implement robust protocols in our churches so as to create a safe and welcoming environment through proper physical distancing, the use of masks, and sanitizing. We have participated fully in the directions given to us by health officials. As Christ’s faithful, we are leaders in the community. The additional safety measures being asked of us at this time are for the health and protection of all people, especially the most vulnerable among us. I encourage you to continue the efforts you and your parishes have made in the past few months.

We are called to reflect the light of Christ in the world. In this very challenging time let us be true witnesses and examples of His light. This temporary disruption is an opportunity to go ever deeper in personal and family prayer, and with the graces received continue to safely reach out to our neighbours and those who are suffering physically, emotionally and spiritually in these difficult days. I invite you to intercede in prayer for those directly affected by COVID-19, for their families and those who care for them. Through prayer and vigilance may we soon fully resume public worship and receive the Eucharist and other sacraments that will provide the spiritual strength needed to face and overcome this difficult time, and serve others in charity.

With every assurance of my prayers and pastoral solicitude, I remain

Faithfully yours in Jesus with Mary,

✠ Christian Riesbeck, CC
Bishop of Saint John