

## Mission Leadership - Divine Worship



The Catholic  
Archdiocese  
of Edmonton

### Memorandum

Date: September 16, 2021

To: Priests, Deacons, and Parish Office Staff

From: Rev. Paul Kavanagh, Senior Lead – Mission Leadership

Subject: **UPDATED – Temporary Measures of Alberta**

The health and safety of everyone in our churches and our Archdiocesan facilities is the top priority for the Archdiocese, the pastor, parish staff and volunteers, especially during this time of pandemic.

The risk of COVID infection continues to be present and so is the need for everyone to take responsibility to protect each other from this potentially deadly virus. It is our Christian duty to do so.

On Sept. 15, the Alberta government declared a local state of public health emergency. COVID cases and hospitalizations are increasing, putting extreme pressure on the health system. The Alberta government has mandated new, temporary measures to curb the spread of COVID.

Therefore, the following measures are to be implemented as of this date unless stated otherwise. Here is what's new. New measures have also been highlighted.

### What's new?

- Masks are mandatory
- Capacity is limited to one-third fire code occupancy
- Indoor wedding ceremonies and funeral services are permitted with up to 50 people or 50 per cent of fire code occupancy effective Sept. 20, whichever is less.
- Indoor wedding and funeral receptions are prohibited, unless the hosting facility implements the restrictions exemption program.
- Attendance at baptisms is allowed for up to 50 people or 50 per cent of fire code occupancy, whichever is less.
- No social gatherings are permitted in parish halls and facilities.
- Each parish will implement previous protocols to determine attendance (online registration or first come, first served)
- The dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass continues for dioceses in the Province of Alberta.
- It is strongly encouraged to continue/resume sanitization and hygiene protocols/practices that were previously in place in each parish as soon as is possible.

## Masks and Physical Distancing

- The use of masks is mandatory at Mass and in all indoor public facilities of the parishes and Archdiocesan facilities
- All Archdiocesan employees must mask in all indoor work settings, except while alone in work stations.
- **The only mask exceptions are for children under two years of age and those with a medically certified exemption**

## Places of Worship

- **Masks are mandatory**
- **Capacity is limited to one-third fire code occupancy**
- Two metres of physical distancing must be maintained between households, or two close contacts for those living alone.

## Liturgical Guidelines on Mass

- **Each parish will implement previous protocols to determine attendance (online registration or first come, first served)**
- No contact tracing information is to be collected.
- Priests, deacons, and lectors must always wear the mask unless speaking and proclaiming.
- Altar servers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, the cantor, and instrumentalists/musicians must wear masks at all times.
- Two metres physical distancing required between households, or two close contacts for those living alone.
- Congregational singing is suspended at this time.
- Only one (1) cantor/soloist is allowed.
- The cantor/soloist must wear the mask while singing/chanting and must be located away from the congregation and the instrumentalists/musicians.
- The use of the mask is required when singing/chanting
- Singing by the cantor/soloist will be limited to the following: Entrance antiphon or unfamiliar hymn, preparation of the altar, Communion, recessional
- Instrumental music may replace singing.
- The offertory procession will not resume at this time to avoid unnecessary contact with the vessels. Its resumption will be decided by the end of October 2021.
- It is strongly encouraged to continue/resume sanitization and hygiene protocols/practices, which were previously in place in each parish as soon as is possible.

## Distribution of Holy Communion

- Priests/deacons/Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion must wear the mask during the distribution of Holy Communion. Hands must be sanitized prior to the distribution.

- 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 Communion on the tongue or a "blessing."
- The communicant removes the mask in front of the priest/deacon/Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion to receive Communion and must put it back on after consuming the consecrated host.
- Communion is only given under one species - the consecrated host.
- Communion on the tongue continues to be offered.
- If the Ordinary/Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion comes in contact with the Communicant in the distribution, please sanitize hands with a quick-drying, alcohol-based hand sanitizer before continuing to distribute Holy Communion.
- The Precious Blood will only be available to the celebrant and concelebrants. Concelebrants should receive by self-intinction from a separate chalice if there are more than one.
- For a single concelebrant, he may partake of the precious blood by drinking from the separate chalice and purifying it himself.

## Working from Home

- Work-from-home measures are an option for those who wish to do so, unless the employer has determined a physical presence is required for operational effectiveness.
- If employees are working on location, they must mask in all indoor settings, except while alone in work stations.

## Archdiocesan Guidelines on Social Gatherings

- No social gatherings are permitted in parish halls and facilities.
- In-person meetings and faith-based meetings, which are not social gatherings, are allowed to continue with attendance limited to one third of the room's fire code occupancy, i.e. council meetings, RCIA, sacrament preparation, support groups, etc.
- Masks must be worn at all times.
- Some parish halls are being used as polling stations. Please check with Elections Canada regarding protocols

## Weddings and Funerals (effective Monday, Sept. 20)

- **Indoor wedding ceremonies and funeral services are permitted with up to 50 people or 50 per cent of fire code occupancy, whichever is less.**
- **Indoor wedding and funeral receptions are prohibited, unless the hosting facility implements the restrictions exemption program.**

## Baptisms

- Attendance at baptisms is allowed for up to 50 people or 50 per cent of fire code occupancy, whichever is less.
- Proper physical distancing and the use of masks are required during the celebration of the rite.

## Reminders

- Parishes that have livestreaming capabilities are encouraged to continue with livestreaming Masses for those who are not comfortable with returning to Mass in person.
- The dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass continues for dioceses in the Province of Alberta.
- Please replace the mandatory masks posters/signage provided by the government in parish facilities with this new poster. Posters included.
- Continue to promote proper hand hygiene by having hand washing/sanitizing posters visible and placing hand sanitizer stations in convenient and accessible locations.
- Make every effort to encourage respiratory etiquette (e.g., coughing or sneezing into a bent elbow, promptly disposing of used tissues in a lined garbage bin).