

***Update for the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas
For: Manitoba Parishes
November 26, 2020***

Liturgical Protocols:

These are challenging times. We need to continue to be careful and to follow the local health authority guidelines in our areas. We also have to be ready to act quickly if and when the Covid-19 virus is identified in our communities. We need to do our best to be cautious.

Due to the recent surge of COVID-19 cases in Manitoba, the entire province is now under Code Red Alert as of November 12, 2020, up until at least December 11, 2020.

1. All Churches are Closed to the Public:

- *All churches must be closed to the public while the current Code Red Alert is in effect.*
- *Parishes may conduct masses so that they may be made available to the public over the Internet or through other remote means.*
- *Pastors are to continue to celebrate Mass privately, but with no one in attendance.*
- *“Closed to the public” means just that. No prayer services, Adoration, individual prayer, etc. may take place in churches. ALL faith-based gatherings such as RCIA, catechism, retreats, sacramental preparation sessions, Bible Study, Lectio Divina and Faith Formation activities must be offered online only.*

2. Livestreaming/Broadcasting of Masses:

- *The livestreaming of Masses is permitted. We continue to livestream the Sunday Mass from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Cathedral every Sunday at 10:30 am on both the youth Facebook Page and on YouTube. Parishes which are also currently livestreaming Masses are encouraged to continue to do so.*
- *Parish teams providing the service can be composed of more than five persons if needed, but within reason, while following all safety protocols.*
- *The doubling up of responsibilities (cantor, musician, lector, altar server, etc.) is highly recommended.*
- *People should not be singing near each other (unless from the same household) and should avoid using hymnals that another person has recently used.*

- *The offertory procession is to be eliminated at this time. The gifts of bread and wine should be placed on a credence table in the sanctuary prior to the Liturgy.*
- *It is important that the bread and wine placed on the altar for consecration be covered, by a pall or other covering, so as to ensure no contamination. We generally are distributing communion from the ciborium in the tabernacle to help reduce the possibility of spread of virus.*
- *The sign of peace is expressed with a bow of the head toward your neighbour.*
- *Communion from the cup is to be discontinued during this time. Those distributing communion should sanitize their hands thoroughly in a discreet location immediately after they have received Communion and before accepting a ciborium for distribution. Communion is to be distributed only on the hand of each communicant with great care not to make physical contact. Face coverings (masks) must be worn by those distributing Communion. These face coverings (masks) must be affixed and secured before sanitizing hands.*
- *Though the presider and deacon should not use face coverings (masks) during the celebration of the Liturgy, face coverings (masks) are now mandatory at the time of the distribution of Communion. Altar servers, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion as well as readers must wear face coverings (masks); readers should remove them for the proclamation of the Word. Gloves should not be worn by any liturgical minister during the celebration of the Liturgy. Those standing or seated in the sanctuary must ensure that physical/social distancing is observed. This same observance applies to music leaders.*

When livestreaming a Mass, please keep in mind that it is **essential** that the proper necessary public health measures are maintained.

3. Weddings, Funerals and Baptisms:

- *At present, weddings, funerals and baptisms are limited to five people, plus the celebrant.*

Please note that the celebrant, as well as other persons assigned by the parish, such as a cantor or lector, are NOT to be counted among the five persons attending. In the case of funerals, staff from a funeral home are NOT to be counted.

This and wakes are some of our most challenging times to gather. If a funeral is to be celebrated, the established hand sanitizing and physical/social distancing requirements for the assembly must be observed. The worship space and all public spaces must be thoroughly cleaned after use. A sanitizing disinfectant must be applied throughout all spaces and all surfaces wiped down after each use.

4. Reconciliation: *Due to COVID-19 Provincial restrictions, we are not able to administer the Sacrament of Reconciliation face-to-face with anyone who requests it at this time. More information will be provided in the near future.*

5. Anointing of the Sick: *Communal celebrations of the Anointing of the Sick are not to be held during this time. Individual anointing must ensure physical/social distancing. The presider must wear a face covering (mask) and use a cotton or Q-Tip type swab to apply the sacred oil. Priests who are asked to anoint in hospital settings must abide by the hospital guidelines.*

6. Communion to Shut-Ins and to the Sick: *Due to COVID-19 Provincial restrictions, we are unable to bring communion to shut-ins and/or to the sick at this time.*

Conclusion

As we continue to live through the challenging times of COVID- 19 and with the restrictions on large gatherings which follow from the pandemic, it is important that we be united in prayer, Christian solidarity and the practice of patience.

May God continue to bless all of you, so that together we may come through this time of tribulation with renewed faith, unwavering hope and self-giving love.

Yours in Christ,

*Most Rev. Murray Chatlain
Fr. Jim Fiori OMI
Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas*