

***Update for the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas
For: Saskatchewan Parishes
May 29, 2021***

Effective May 30, 2021, the total number of people participating in a Mass or liturgy cannot exceed 30 per cent of seating capacity or 150 people, whichever is less.

Concurrent services or gatherings held concurrently with a liturgy are permitted in other rooms in the facility, as long as the overall number of people does not exceed 30 per cent of seating capacity or 150 people for the entire facility.

The capacity limit applies to all persons within the place of worship except clergy/religious leadership and key staff/volunteers. Please keep this number as low as possible and in any case, no more than 6 individuals required to facilitate.

Churches can be open for prayer. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament may take place provided at least one person remains present throughout.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation can be offered in accordance with the following:

- *Confessionals may be used if satisfying the requirements of personal distancing.*
- *Alternative spaces should be made ready that allow for protection of the seal of the sacrament as well as personal distancing.*

Baptisms may take place in accordance with the following:

- *All of the directives concerning capacity and social distancing should be observed.*
- *The priest is to wear a mask when close proximity is necessary for the baptism.*
- *Water should be blessed in a separate receptacle (large pitcher) and poured over each candidate.*
- *Anointing may be done with a cotton swab or purify hands between each anointing.*
- *Holy water fonts are to remain empty until further notice.*

Hand sanitizer and/or alternate sanitizing options should be available throughout the church.

Couples or families from the same household may sit together and are to maintain a personal distancing of two meters (six-feet) between their family and other families.

Appropriate and adequate signage should be posted indicating the requirement of distancing and maximum numbers.

Pews, door handles and knobs, restrooms and high traffic areas of the church are to be wiped down and sanitized, with the removal of trash and other items from the pews, at regular intervals.

Non-ceremonial gatherings are permitted in groups no larger than 30 as long as physical distancing directives are being followed.

MASS

In order to maintain personal distancing and reduce the spread of the virus, parishes will need to enact the following:

- *Parishes may need to consider temporarily adjusting or adding to their Mass schedule.*
- *Parishes are permitted to only allow the maximum permitted number of persons to access / enter the church, including the priest and ministry volunteers. This may require communicating to the people in advance of the Liturgy.*

Contact Tracing

For the purposes of contact tracing, places of worship are required to collect and maintain a list of people that are present within their facilities for any purposes. Contact details must include date, time, name, address, and phone number or email address. (If details are available through parishioner registration the attendee name will suffice.

- *Contact registration lists must be maintained confidentially by the place of worship and destroyed after 30 days.*

Appropriate cleaning of high use areas within the church is to be done before and after each service.

An announcement may need to be made before Mass about personal distancing, the collection, reception of Communion, and other protocols.

Please refer to the Re-open Saskatchewan Plan for full guidelines for Places of Worship.

Families are to maintain six-foot distancing between their family and other families or individuals throughout the celebration of Mass.

Masking for all Parishes and Ministry

All individuals require masks at all times with the exception of individuals under the age of two and those whose particular medical condition prevents them from wearing a mask as determined by a health professional.

Masks are required for cantors, singers and soloists.

Speakers at podiums are not required to wear their mask while speaking to the congregation provided that there is a minimum 3 meters (10 feet) between the speaker and others. This means a priest and/or lector are not required to use a mask provided that they are at least 3 meters (10 feet) from other members of the congregation.

If contacted by more than one minister, the kissing of the Lectionary or Book of the Gospels is to be omitted. The priest or deacon may substitute this with another form of veneration such as a reverent bow of the head.

The procession at the Preparation of the Gifts is temporarily suspended. Collection baskets (or any other materials) are not to be passed from one family to another.

The Sign of Peace may be omitted entirely, or done with a simple gesture, such as a reverent bow, there is to be no physical contact.

Conclusion

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*

Mass is generally to be celebrated without servers at the altar.

A priest or deacon considered high-risk is permitted to refrain from distributing Holy Communion and may delegate distribution to an extraordinary minister of Communion where necessary. Extraordinary Ministers of Communion may also be used where necessary due to time and the number of communicants. Proper distancing and Communion lines will need to be considered.