



Diocese of Kamloops
BISHOP'S OFFICE

St. Patrick, March 17, 2020

Dear Clergy, Religious and faithful of the Diocese of Kamloops,

Yesterday, the BC Provincial Health Officer and the Minister of Health announced further restrictions to prevent the transmission of the COVID-19 virus by limiting the number of persons for any public gathering to no more than 50.

Given these restrictions:

- I hereby, dispense the faithful of the diocese from the obligation of attending Sunday Mass (c. 87) until further notice.
- I ask that daily Mass, including Mass on Sundays, be offered in each parish and that you continue to make the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly available with due accommodation for "social distancing".
- Due to the new restrictions, the Chrism Mass on Tuesday, April 7th, will be closed to the public.

Until now, it is uncertain how long these new restrictions issued by the public health authorities will be in effect. Further direction regarding the liturgies of Holy Triduum will be forthcoming as more information becomes available.

In addition to the measures currently in effect, the following New Measures should be adopted immediately:

1. Avoid physical contact with others. A distance of two metres should be maintained at all times, including in the lineup to receive Holy Communion. Congregants should sit in alternating rows. It may be helpful to use masking tape on the back of the pews to mark off two-metre spacing.
2. Please remove all hymnals, prayer cards, envelopes and other materials from the pews. Parishes are encouraged to use a projector to provide song lyrics, if available.
3. If collection baskets with handles are not available, monitored collection baskets should be placed at the back of the church, where people can deposit their offerings.
4. Following each Mass or gathering, all pew backs, table-tops and other high-touch surfaces should be disinfected, as much as possible.
5. Offertory processions are to be omitted.

Reverend Fathers, please communicate this message as best as you can through your parish channels such as your website, email lists and phone calls to those who do not access to the internet and social media.

With prayers,

* Joseph Phuong Nguyen
Bishop of Kamloops