

Mission Leadership – Divine Worship



The Catholic
Archdiocese
of Edmonton

November 26, 2020

Dear Father,

With this memorandum, we are updating our guidelines pertaining to liturgical celebrations and the use of parish space in light of yesterday's announcement by the Government of Alberta regarding [enhanced public health measures](#) to keep everyone safe, protect the health system and slow the spread of Covid-19. These latest provincial restrictions are in place for the next three weeks, at which time the province will review them. We shall review these liturgical policies at the same time, in dialogue with the office of the Chief Medical Officer.

We ask that in all parishes throughout the Archdiocese of Edmonton:

1. All Alberta Health Services (AHS) and government regulations continue to be observed.
2. All previous Covid-19 Archdiocesan guidelines continue to be in effect and should be followed by all parishes regardless of the municipality in which they are located.
3. If a parish cannot implement provincial and liturgical guidelines, the parish should not be offering mass to the public.
4. Dispensation of the faithful from the obligation to attend Sunday mass remains in place until decreed otherwise by the Archbishop.

Mask use is mandatory

Mask use continues to be mandatory throughout the liturgy for all the faithful. Those who are not able to wear a mask for medical reasons can be exempt from this regulation. Pastors are asked to ensure that volunteers are not policing people. If there is an instance in which a parishioner is not wearing a mask or refuses to wear one, volunteers should refer the matter to the Pastor, and the Pastor should address the issue with delicacy, discretion and gentleness. The celebrant and others speaking in front of a congregation are permitted to remove their masks while speaking provided they maintain 2 metre distance from others while doing so. Once finished speaking, the speaker must put on their mask again.

Celebration of weekday and Sunday mass in the Church

At this time, weekday and Sunday masses cannot exceed one-third church capacity per service or less if required for safe social distancing. Physical distancing between households must be maintained. Active participation in the liturgy through online streaming should be encouraged.

Funerals, interments outside or in mausoleums and weddings

The limit for funerals and interments outside or in mausoleums is 10. The limit for wedding liturgies is also 10 (including the officiant, the bride and groom, and the witnesses). This number does not include staff or organizers who are not considered invited guests. The Alberta Government has explained that the purpose of this measure is to help limit exposure, reduce outbreaks and protect vulnerable attendees. Please note that any funeral or wedding that is celebrated from now until a new liturgical update is issued should follow this limit.

Wedding and funeral receptions

Receptions and gatherings of any type are not allowed under any circumstance at this time. These measures will be in place until further notice.

In-person faith group meetings

In-person faith group meetings conducted at a place of worship such as RCIA, Sacramental Preparation classes, CWL and Knights of Columbus can continue. The maximum allowable attendance is 10. Physical distancing and public health measures must be followed. Please note that these types of meetings are not permitted in private homes.

Liturgy of baptism outside of mass

At this time, liturgies of baptisms within mass are not allowed. When celebrating liturgies of baptism outside of mass, the maximum allowable attendance is 10. Each baptismal celebration should be limited to the one child (or children) of the family/household. If godparents do not belong to the family's cohort, proper physical distancing should be observed at all times. This provision is based on what AHS sees as the high risk posed to individuals participating in these liturgies.

Parishes exposed to Covid-19

In the event that a parish is exposed to Covid-19 through a parishioner or the Pastor, we ask that:

1. Contact is made with Health Link by dialing 811 and all instructions given by Alberta Health Services are followed.
2. Notify the PAO by contacting [Patrick Snoek](#), our Human Resources Lead.
3. No parish should close without first speaking to the Archbishop. If a Pastor is thinking of closing a church, please contact [Rita Strauss](#) to speak to his Grace.

Working from home

Working from home should be considered in all parish offices, where possible.

Questions or concerns

If you would like an official answer to any questions or concerns you might have, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at divineworship@caedm.ca or by texting or phoning me at 780.266.4898.

With assurance of my prayers,



Fr. Miguel Irizar
Lead

cc: Permanent Deacons, Parish Staff, Catholic Cemeteries