



ANGLICAN DIOCESE MONTREAL

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January 7, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Grace and peace to you as we continue in these uncertain and worrying times. I hold onto and celebrate that God is with us always.

I am grateful to Bishop Bruce Myers for his work at the Interfaith Roundtable which has been meeting with representatives of the Quebec government. He was able to clarify that we are allowed to have a small team if we need them to record services that are going to be broadcast. We must observe social distancing and wear masks at all times. There will be an update published at some point on the government web site but I thought it would be helpful to tell you.

At this month's meeting of Diocesan Council, it was recognized that some parishes are concerned about meeting their budgets for the coming year. With this in mind, a motion was passed to suspend Diocesan Assessments for the first quarter of 2021. This decision will be reviewed again by Council at the end of the first quarter.

The Federal Government has announced the criteria required to qualify to receive the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (DEWS) for the first quarter of 2021. Synod office will apply for the subsidy on behalf of the parishes as we did in 2020. While it is not entirely clear exactly what percentage of subsidy we will qualify for, invoices to cover the balance of payroll expenses not covered by CEWS will be sent to parishes at the end of the month/beginning of the month for the previous month.

In my last letter I noted that Annual General Vestry Meetings would be held virtually. The recommendation is that AGV's be held using a platform like Zoom which also allows parishioners to attend by telephone. One particular question that has come up is in regards to quorum at Vestries. The important thing to remember is to ensure that you provide the parish with sufficient notice of when the meeting will be held. The Canons require 2 consecutive Sundays, but ideally if your corporations are able to fix a date now and make those announcements with more than two weeks' notice it will provide ample opportunity for members of vestry to plan on attending. One challenging item with a virtual platform is the question of elections of officers. For this reason, you may notify your congregations that nominations on the actual day of the vestry meeting will not be accepted and that all nominations must be done in writing at least two weeks before vestry. This will allow your search committees to put together a slate of candidates for the various offices which can easily be voted on as a single item. If there are multiple candidates seeking the same office, the

advance notice will give you time to find a way of organizing an election. Please be in touch with your territorial archdeacon for support if you need assistance.

As we approach the beginning of Lent it is unclear if Ash Wednesday (February 17) will be observed within the current pandemic restrictions or if we will be permitted to gather. There are a number of creative ways that we can approach the question of how to impose ashes if we aren't able to touch each other or if we are observing Ash Wednesday on-line. Some possibilities include providing parishioners with small envelopes of ashes that could be taken home and self-imposed (or if others are in the household bubble can be imposed by household members) during the virtual service of Ash Wednesday. One might also encourage others to produce their own ashes (from a fire place hearth) or use soil. I encourage you to discuss within your clericus group what possibilities would be most suitable within your particular context.

I am sorry that this year's Clergy Lenten Retreat will have to be virtual but delighted that the Primate will be leading it for us. We are still working out the details but please hold the evening of Sunday March 14th to the end of Monday March 15. Clergy can expect more information about registration in the coming weeks.

Next week is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and I encourage you to participate in whatever gatherings (online) are being organized. I will be preaching on Thursday January 21st for the Fraternités Monastiques de Jérusalem à Montréal on YouTube and attending a service organized by the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism on January 24th at 3pm. If you have not already registered to attend, I am attaching the letter with the link below. You can choose Zoom or YouTube and they will email you a link. Either way, please make a point of reaching out to and praying for our fellow Christians even if you cannot participate in a service of prayer together.

Every blessing,



Dear friends,

Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit (Jn 15,5-9)

This is the chosen theme for the **2021 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**. On this occasion, let us come virtually together for a moment of unity. More than ever, in these pandemic times, Christian Unity is essential to us; the whole world needs our prayers.

We are looking forward to seeing you on **Sunday, January 24, 2021, at 3:00pm via Zoom or Youtube**. To participate, we kindly invite you [to register here](#) for receiving the connection link. We will send the link to you at the beginning of January 2021.

Dr. Adriana Bara

Executive Director of the **Canadian Centre for Ecumenism**

on behalf of the Organizing Committee, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2021