



Montreal, the Feast of St. Patrick
March 17, 2021

Dear Clergy and Wardens,

Further to Bishop Mary's announcement on Sunday at the Annual Clergy Lenten Retreat, the provincial government has made several announcements about restrictions to in-person worship in the last week.

Please note that effective **Friday, March 26, 2021** the government will relax the restrictions on places of worship in red zones regarding the number of people that are permitted to gather to allow for a maximum of **25 persons total** (or 50% of capacity with 2 meters distance between households, whichever is less).

Parishes who had already received permission (last Fall) to re-open in-person worship may re-open for worship in Phase II or Phase III (depending on which phase you were in when we reverted to Phase I) effective **Sunday, March 28, Palm Sunday**. If you have not already done so, you are asked to be in touch with my office to confirm your desire to re-open for in-person worship and to let the Diocese know in which phase you will be re-opening.

Since our last update, the province has also pushed the curfew to 9:30pm in red zones, which will allow parishes who were planning services during Holy Week to gather in-person during the evening.

Another change relates to the use of masks. The province has made it a requirement that everyone attending in-person worship must wear a procedural mask – cloth masks may be worn in addition to the procedural mask, but at minimum a procedural mask should be worn.

All other guidelines as outlined in the Diocesan Guidelines for Re-Opening Churches are in effect, which would include: physical distancing, a record-log of attendees for contact tracing purposes, sanitization of hands and common touch places, no congregational singing, the use of 1 or 2 cantors who are at a greater distance from the congregation present, etc.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me – sometimes it is easier to talk through some of the logistics than it is to email, so please do call to talk through any concerns.

You may find government guidelines on line at the following links – simply click on your region for specifics to red zones and scroll down to “Places of Worship”:

[Measures in force | Gouvernement du Québec \(quebec.ca\)](#)

[Mesures en vigueur COVID-19 | Gouvernement du Québec \(quebec.ca\)](#)

Wishing you many blessings as we move toward Holy Week,