



DIOCÈSE DE HEARST-MOOSONEE DIOCESE

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Date: April 7, 2021
To: Parishes and priests
From: Deacon Jean Beausoleil, Chancellor
Re: Province of Ontario – Third Provincial Emergency and Stay-at-home Order to Address COVID-19

On April 7, 2021 the Province of Ontario announced a third Provincial Emergency and Stay-at-home order to address the COVID-19 crisis. They come into effect starting at 12:01am on **April 8, 2021**. The stay-at-home order requires everyone to remain at home with exceptions for essential purposes. It will last 28 days.

Parishioners are encouraged to adhere to this directive to remain home with exceptions for essential purposes, which includes, for example Sunday or daily Mass.

Starting April 8, religious services (including Mass), weddings, funerals (and baptisms) continue to be limited to 15% of capacity (including priest and volunteers) indoors with physical distancing and in compliance with rules on face coverings as long as we are in a Provincial Emergency. Funerals can never have more than 50 people by order of the Bereavement Authority of Ontario. The COVID-19 protocols need to be observed. Parishes are strongly encouraged to livestream Masses during the Provincial Emergency.

In some places, health officials have expressed concern regarding the faithful congregating in or around the church before or after services in large numbers. This point should be communicated to parishioners – arrival and dismissal should be co-ordinated in such a fashion to ensure large groups do not congregate.

In person indoor meetings or non-religious-service gatherings are not allowed during the time of the Provincial Emergency. Parish offices are to be closed to the public and working on a curbside model of service. The Pastor is to decide which parish staff members are required to work on-site according to the following requirement: *Each person responsible for a business or organization that is open shall ensure that any person who performs work for the business or organization conducts their work remotely, with limited exception, for instance, where the nature of their work requires them to be on-site at the workplace.*

Should you have any questions, please contact the Chancery.

Thank you for your continued cooperation during these challenging days.