



Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria

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M E M O

Date: January 8, 2021

To: Clergy, Parishes, Religious, Parishioners, and Staff

From: Bishop Gary Gordon

Re: COVID-19 Provincial Health Order *EXTENDED until February 5'21*

On Thursday, January 7, 2021, Minister of Health Adrian Dix, and Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry extended the Provincial Health Order currently in place with restrictions to curb the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, the following Directives remain in place in the Diocese:

- All Masses, Sunday Celebration of the Word, and scheduled Liturgical events with a congregation remain suspended. Parishioners in the Diocese of Victoria **remain dispensed** from the Sunday obligation to attend Mass.
- During these extraordinary circumstances, parishioners are encouraged to participate remotely in the celebration of the Eucharist utilizing various means of communication, including the television, live-stream or taped options. The opportunity to enhance the celebration of the Liturgy, though remotely, with the addition of a cantor, musician, proclaimer, and videographer is permitted.
- Priests will continue to respond, upon request, to people in the hospital or at home who are gravely ill.
- Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals may be celebrated, with immediate family only, and no more than 10 people present (including the priest). Receptions are not permitted.
- Individual appointments for Confessions are permitted.
- Parishes that normally keep their churches open during the day for private prayer may retain this practice, while maintaining normal protocols, including maintaining physical distancing, masks, and sanitizing
- In order to reduce social isolation, we are encouraged to communicate via phone and email, and to perform acts of charity by staying in contact with friends, neighbours, co-workers, and parishioners in need.

Thank you to all the People of God in our Diocese who work together, in the words of Pope Francis “to cooperate and care for the most vulnerable, doing the hard work of learning to listen to and accompany others” during this pandemic. The Gospel Acclamation for today “Jesus preached the good news of the kingdom and healed all who were sick” (Mt.4.23) encourages us to remain united in prayer as we look to the light that dawns on the horizon of hope in the future.