



MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 8, 2020

TO: All diocesan and religious priests

COPY: Permanent deacons, Parish Life Directors, Seminarians, Parish Secretaries, Superiors of Religious Congregations, Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Parish Pastoral Councils, Employees of the Archdiocesan Centre

FROM: Most Reverend Albert LeGatt
Archbishop of Saint Boniface

SUBJECT: **COVID-19 Pandemic—Weekly Update No. 3**

Dear friends,

This week, we have chosen to send you the Weekly Update today in light of Holy Week. Otherwise, my office will issue a weekly update every Friday with new information and also further clarification on questions that have been brought forward, especially by the Deans at our weekly Tuesday morning teleconference.

Protocol Level and Places of Worship

Protocol III is still in force. The March 27 directive of Dr. Brent Roussin, Chief Public Health Officer, also remains in force: *"Public gatherings are limited to no more than 10 people at any indoor or outdoor place or premises. This includes places of worship, gatherings and family events such as weddings and funerals."* It is important to remember what this order entails, that is to say what we can and cannot do. Please refer to [Weekly Update No. 2](#), which was sent out on April 3.

Easter Triduum—Diocesan Livestreamed Liturgies

Holy Thursday

Presider: Archbishop Albert LeGatt

In French at 6:00 PM, homily by Archbishop Albert LeGatt

In English at 8:00 PM, homily by Archbishop Albert LeGatt

Good Friday

Presider: Archbishop Albert LeGatt

In French at 2:00 PM, homily by Br. Germain Kpakafi, O.F.M. Cap



In English at 4:00 PM, homily by Mr. Doug Cross, permanent deacon

Easter Vigil

In French at 9:00 PM

Presider: Archbishop Albert LeGatt at Saints-Martyrs-Canadiens Parish, homily by Archbishop LeGatt

In English at 9:00 PM

Presider: Fr. Carl Tarnopolski, V.G., at St. Bernadette Parish, homily by Fr. Tarnopolski

The links for the English Easter Vigil will be posted shortly on the Archdiocesan website.

Easter Sunday

Presider: Archbishop Albert LeGatt

In French at 9:00 AM, homily by Mr. Michel Landry, permanent deacon

In English at 10:30 AM, homily by Archbishop Albert LeGatt

The liturgies can be accessed via the Saints-Martyrs-Canadiens parish YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFLbnkM6HIRYpb4QjiXeBOg/live>

And on the diocesan Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/ArchSaintBoniface/live>

We recommend that those with hearing impairments participate in the Masses via the Saints-Martyrs-Canadiens or St. Bernadette (for the English Easter Vigil) parish YouTube channels.

PLEASE NOTE: the liturgies will begin at the precise time indicated for the livestream. If you access the Facebook or YouTube page before that time, you may end up participating in the end of the previous liturgy.

Why not livestream from the St. Boniface Cathedral Parish? We will explain our reasoning.

We have chosen the parishes of Saints-Martyrs-Canadiens and St. Bernadette because it is already a common practice in these parishes to livestream their masses to Facebook or YouTube. This makes it much easier for us to livestream our diocesan liturgies. Furthermore, the lighting and acoustics of these churches lend themselves well to the taking of videos. For example, due to the height of its sanctuary, it would be much more difficult to position the cameras and capture a good sound quality at the Cathedral.

Priests' Private Masses and Their Participation in the Easter Triduum and Easter Sunday Liturgies

Please first refer to Weekly Update No. 2, sent April 3, to review the principles and consequences that stem from them pertaining to the pastors' Sunday and weekday masses. Everything that was detailed in this Weekly Update remains in effect.



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That being said, and as a follow-up to the teleconference that took place on April 7 between the eight deans (representing the eight regions of our diocese), Fr. Carl Tarnopolski, V.G., and myself, the following directives are given. In deciding to adopt these measures, we are following the advice of Manitoba's Chief Health Officer, Dr. Brent Roussin, who has advised that the next two weeks will be the most critical. This requires the highest degree of physical isolation, which requires that everyone stay home.

Holy Thursday

Private Masses will be celebrated by the pastor, according to the aforementioned indications.

Good Friday and Easter Vigil

We ask all priests to refrain from celebrating the liturgies of the Passion of Our Lord and the Easter Vigil in private.

Rather, we ask all priests to participate in the Good Friday and Easter Vigil liturgies by livestreaming these archdiocesan liturgies. The priests are encouraged to refrain from celebrating the Vigil alone because this highest celebration of the mysteries of the death and the resurrection really do require, from a liturgical standpoint, an assembly.

Easter Sunday

A private Mass should be celebrated by the pastor according to the usual guidelines.

Exception: If your parish already livestreams your liturgies at all times, the pastor and his team (with a maximum of 10 people) may celebrate all of the liturgies of Holy Week.

The Veneration of the Cross

Please communicate with your parishioners and your members that it would be good for them to have a small cross or crucifix with them at the time of the veneration while livestreaming the service via Facebook or YouTube.

According to the directives presently in place, churches can remain open, provided that there are no more than 10 people present at a time, physical distancing of two metres is respected, etc. Therefore, it is possible to communicate the hours during which your church will be open, while clearly indicating that no one is to approach and touch the cross that you use for the assembly's veneration, which will be in its usual place. If your church is open for a certain amount of time on Good Friday, the priest should be present in the church to greet people and to direct all individual veneration.

Lighting of Candles in our Homes to Celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

Taking note of the initial suggestion by Michèle Sala Pastora, parishioner of Holy Family Parish, as well as by several other people (see the article *Spread the Light this Easter* by Brenda Suderman on the Faith Page of the Winnipeg Free Press posted on Saturday, April 4), I am proposing we also "*spread the light this Easter*". Thus, I am inviting

all the faithful of the Archdiocese of St. Boniface to light a candle, or other source of light (battery-powered) at 9:00 PM or a few minutes earlier on Saturday, April 11th and to place it in the main window of their home.

Archbishop Richard Gagnon, in a similar way, has asked the faithful of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg to light a candle (and ring a bell) at 8:00 PM, the time their Easter Vigils usually begin. In the Archdiocese of St. Boniface, our diocesan livestreaming of the Easter Vigil begins at 9:00 PM, in English from St. Bernadette Church and in French from Saints-Martyrs-Canadiens Church. Therefore, at this precise time, or a few minutes before, we are all invited to light our candles and place them in the window *“as a light for the world”*.

Ringings of Church Bells

I would also invite you to ring your church bells at noon on Easter Sunday and on every Sunday until Pentecost, i.e. until the end of the Easter Season. Please ring them for at least five minutes.

In this context, the joyous ringing of bells is to signal our gratitude to all frontline workers throughout our society, all those thousands of people who leave their homes and their security of their good health, to engage in the whole sphere of essential services by which the rest of us continue to live, as normally as possible, be in security and know we will be cared for as we need it.

However, for this to have its maximum effect, we need to inform our parishioners why the bells are being rung. If your parish decides to embark on this project, please inform your people of this in the coming days.

We are also trying to invite other Christian Churches and even other faith communities to join similar efforts, each according to their tradition and practice.

The Archdiocesan Centre Remains Open

Despite having closed the Diocesan Centre to the public, all diocesan services, including the Office of the Archbishop, Administration, and Pastoral Services, continue to be offered remotely with as few service interruptions possible.

During Holy Week and the week of Easter the offices of the Archdiocesan Centre will be closed:

Holy Thursday—April 9, 2020 (from noon on)
 Good Friday—April 10, 2020
 Easter Monday—April 13, 2020

The offices will reopen on Tuesday, April 14, 2020.

Clarification from the Chief Public Health Officer

On March 31, 2020, our Communications Coordinator, Mr. Daniel Bahuaud, wrote to the Government of Manitoba (Public Health Office) asking the following three questions. We have included the answers received by the Government of Manitoba.



1. Are churches still able to have up to ten people in them at a time?

Yes, places of worship including churches can continue to be open as long as there are less than 10 people in attendance. In addition, it is required to implement measures to ensure that people attending the place of worship are reasonably able to maintain a separation of at least two meters from each other. (Answered April 1st)

2. Can the diocesan and parish offices remain open?

Faith organizations may operate remotely like an excluded business. This means they can have staff inside for filming/broadcast/office work. However, they must follow social distancing guidelines and are limited to gatherings of 10 people or less. (Answered April 4)

3. Are churches and other faith organizations considered essential services?

Faith organizations are listed specifically in the public gathering order; they are not included on the essential services schedule. (Answered April 4)

Message from Pope Francis

I share with you today two excerpts from Pope Francis' message during his general audience of today, Wednesday, April 8, 2020.

"The cross is 'the chair' of God" "It will do us good to look at the Crucified One in silence and see who our Lord is: He does not point His finger at anyone, but opens His arms wide to all, even to the one who is crucifying Him; He does not crush us with his glory, but allows Himself to be undressed for us; He does not love us with words, but gives us life in silence." *It is time, the Pope observed, "to free ourselves from prejudices about God, and to look at the Crucified One."*

"In these days of quarantine when we are secluded at home, let's take these two things in our hands: the Crucified One—let's look at Him—and the Gospel. It will be for us like a great domestic liturgy because we cannot go to church."

United in prayer,

+ Albert LeGatt

+ Albert LeGatt
Archbishop of Saint Boniface