

Welcome Back to

Parish of Saint Leonard

A Worship Safe Environment

June 24, 2020

My Dear Parishioners,

It is with joy that I announce the re-opening of our Church. Our first public Mass will be on Saturday, July 4, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.. At the core of who we are, as disciples of Christ is our love for God and love of our neighbour. Our hunger to return to our place of worship reveals our love for God. In the midst of this pandemic, we must absolutely be mindful of the safety of our neighbours.

We have so many questions at this time regarding the safe return to church and to the celebration of the Mass. Please find below a working question and answer to help guide us along the way. Is it perfect? No. We will learn along the way. I thank you in advance for your patience and understanding. The health and safety of all is our first concern.

Our celebration will be simplified. I hope that our worship experience be one that is life-giving, as we break open the Word of God and are fed by the Body of Christ.

Please remember, the dispensation from Sunday Mass continues, and a video will be available on our parish facebook page and Youtube after 5:00 p.m. each Saturday.

May God bless each of you and those that you love. Welcome home.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JR Day', written in a cursive style.

Parish Priest

Questions & Answers

If I am still not comfortable attending Mass, am I still dispensed from my Sunday obligation?

Yes. Bishop Kirkpatrick has indicated that those who may not be able to attend Sunday Mass for health reasons or due to capacity restrictions are dispensed from their obligation to attend. COVID-19 is still in a threat to public health, and our churches are open to up to 50 people only. Those who are considered vulnerable and those who care for them should not attend.

Is it alright for me to attend Mass at Church?

Those who are vulnerable should stay at home. This includes anyone who is:

- an older adult
- at risk due to underlying medical conditions (e.g. heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases, cancer)
- at risk due to a compromised immune system from a medical condition or treatment (e.g. chemotherapy)

More information can be found at <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/vulnerable-populations-covid-19.html> and include what the Public health recommends: The best way to stop the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus) is by staying home and avoiding close contact with others outside of your household.

I want to attend Mass at Church. What should I do before I/we go to Church?

The reality is that COVID-19 is still a threat to public health. Doing your part to ensure the safety of all will help prevent the spread of this virus. This is why our parish is only open to allow for up to 50 people.

Those who are considered vulnerable and those who care for them should not attend.

If you have any symptoms that might be COVID-19 related, or if you have been in contact with someone suffering from possible or confirmed COVID-19 symptoms, please remain at home and contact Public Health authorities at <https://811.novascotia.ca/>

Click here to take a self-assessment. COVID19INFO COVID19INFO@novascotia.ca

Do I need to wear a face mask?

It is *encouraged* that everyone attending wear a face mask.

Will face masks be provided at the church?

No. Please bring your own face mask.

Will I be turned away if I do not have on face mask?

No. Face masks are simply recommended and encouraged.

Will Father be wearing a face mask and gloves?

No, he will not. He will be doing his self-assessment to ensure the safety for all.

Will hand sanitizer be available?

You will find hand sanitizer at the entrance of the church. Please make use of it upon entry into the church. Some may wish to bring their own for use at other times.

How will you be cleaning the Church?

Pews and all touchpoints will be wiped carefully, after / between masses with Germosolve or sort of approved disinfecting solution.

Where should I enter the church?

Only the main entrance will be used for entry and exit. This will allow us to count the number of attendees to ensure that we comply with the capacity to ensure the safety of all with proper distancing. Our other door(s) may be used entrance/exit is for emergency purposes only. If you require use of the ramp please inform us when you phone the office to register.

How many people will be able to attend Mass at our Parish?

Up to 50 people provided, you call the parish office at 902-862-2255 between 9 – 12 noon to reserve a place for you and family members. **Please do not leave a message on the voicemail, but call again and talk directly to a member of the office staff.**

Where can I sit?

When entering the body of the church you will see clearly marked where you can and cannot sit. You will notice seating is every three pews, 6 feet (2 meters) apart in the pew.

Can my family sit together?

Yes, members of an immediate family can sit together, respecting the proper distance with others in the same pew.

Will I be able to sit in my regular seat?

We request that you only sit where you find the tape markings.

Will we have hymnals?

All hymn books, missals, and other materials have been removed from the church.

Can I sing at Mass?

Government policy is that there be no congregational singing at this time, even with your face mask on.

Will we have our wonderful choirs at Mass?

At present our choirs will not be formally in place.

Will there be bulletins?

There will be no printed bulletins at this time. Please visit our website to view our E-bulletin.

What will be the Mass times?

We will resume our public Mass schedule as follows:

Saturday 4:00 p.m. Sunday 9:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m. *The church will open ½ hour before mass time. At this time there will be no Adoration or Weekday Masses, so that we may accommodate funeral masses for those who have died during the pandemic.

Will Mass continue to be livestreamed and videoed?

Yes! This is an important part of being a caring Roman Catholic Community. We will a video of the mass on our parish Facebook page and YouTube after 5:00 p.m. each Saturday.

Will the Sacrament of Reconciliation be offered?

By appointment, please phone Father Ray at 902-862-2255.

Will there be an entrance / exit procession?

At this time, only the priest / deacon will process in and out at the Mass from the sacristy.

Will there be a procession with the gifts at the time of the offertory?

No. All of the gifts of the water and wine, and the ciborium filled with the hosts will already be in the sanctuary.

How will I receive Holy Communion?

When coming down the aisle please keep 6 feet / 2 meters apart. Tape on the floor will guide you in keeping proper distance apart.

Communicants are instructed to remove their masks (if wearing one) while the person ahead of you is receiving Holy Communion.

Masks should be removed by the ear loops with sanitized hands and not touching the outer mask for Communion. Lowering the mask could contaminate your hands then replacing it to the face can contaminate your face.

After the priest or deacon says, "The Body of Christ" and the communicant responds "Amen" (at a distance of two meters), the communicant then approaches the priest to receive communion.

Can I receive Holy Communion on the tongue?

While it is the right of the communicant to receive communion on the tongue, at this time communion may only be received by hand. Thank you for our understanding.

Will there be Extraordinary Ministers of Communion?

At this time, only the priest / deacon will distribute Holy Communion.

Will there be Altar Servers?

At this time, there will not be altar servers in order to ensure proper distancing. (Father will miss the assistance of our altar servers but looks forward to welcoming them back to this ministry in the future)

Will there be a reader / lector at the Mass?

Yes. We will have one reader at each Mass?

Will the washroom be available?

Church washrooms are to be restricted to use only when necessary. No more than one person/family (living at the same address) at a time should use the restroom. Notices to this effect will be posted outside the restroom. Handwashing signs will also to be placed in the restroom.

Will there be Holy Water to bless oneself?

All Holy Water has been removed at the present time.

Will we be able to exchange the sign of peace?

While hand shaking is not permitted, if it we are invited by our deacon to exchange a sign of peace it will be a simple bow of the head to our neighbor.

Will the Liturgy of the Word for Children be offered at Mass?

This ministry is suspended at this time. Our apologies.

Will the collection be taken at Mass?

The collection will not be taken at the traditional time. When you are exiting the main body of the Church, you will be able to make your traditional offering. Ushers will stand by and provide security.

Can I still make my offering via Pre-authorized contribution (PAC) on a monthly basis.
YES! We encourage you to continue with this method of contributing to our parish. It is easy and the way of the future. Please phone the parish office at 902-862-2255 for details or to drop off your contribution.

How will we exit at the end of Mass?

At the end of Mass, please exit quietly, maintaining physical distancing. Please do not congregate at the doors of the church or in the parking lot.

Are baptisms able to take place?

Yes. Please contact Father Ray for details 902-862-2255.

Can a funeral for my loved one take place at the church?

Yes. At this time, Funeral Masses (with the body or cremated remains present) may be celebrated in the church with up to 50 people present.

When will the First Communion for our children take place?

We share the excitement of our young children! At the present time, we will still be holding off until we can celebrate this sacrament safely.

Will parish meetings and functions be resuming?

At the present time, all meetings and functions, including our Coffee Sunday are on hold.

Is the parish office open?

Parish office services are available. Please phone before visiting.

We are still in the midst of a pandemic, and our primary concern must be for the life and health of the whole community.

We must continue to pray for the people in our community and our world, as we begin to move forward and heal from the devastation of this pandemic.