



Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough

June 10, 2020

Dear Reverend Monsignor, Reverend Fathers, Reverend Deacons, and Staff of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough,

Earlier this week, the government of Ontario announced the reopening of places of worship at a rate of 30% capacity effective on Friday of this week.

Following this announcement, I have consulted with the Pastoral Administration Team, the Reopening Planning Committee and the presbyterate of the Diocese.

While the government has indicated that places of worship may open as of 12:01 a.m. on June 12, it is recognized that cleaning, training and adapted liturgical protocols must be in place to responsibly and safely re-open our churches.

These important tasks are balanced with the understandable desire of the faithful to return to the parish and the celebration of the sacraments.

After consultations and prayer, I have decided that all parishes will follow this timeline for reopening:

June 12 – 13, 2020 – Period of preparation for parishes. Churches remain closed.

Sunday, June 14, 2020 – On the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, churches will be open for private prayer, Sacrament of Reconciliation, and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament only. The pastor will decide whether it is feasible to open mission churches on this day. The pastor will also determine the schedule for the day and post it for the faithful.

Monday, June 15, 2020 – Churches may open for private prayer or remain closed for necessary cleaning and preparation.

Tuesday, June 16, 2020 – Priests begin to celebrate daily Mass in parishes. Masses continue through the week according to the regular schedule or an adapted schedule, as necessary.

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Weekend of June 20/21, 2020 – Sunday Masses may resume.

Please note that as per government direction regarding capacity, churches are limited to 30% of their worship space. Funerals and weddings are restricted to 10 people including the presider at this time. Further protocols and procedures can be found in the Diocese of Peterborough's "Worship Safe" document.

Before opening the church, the Pastor must be satisfied that the Diocese of Peterborough's "Worship Safe" guidelines can be followed. If there are concerns regarding the ability to follow these guidelines in his parish, the pastor should consult with the Chancellor of Spiritual Affairs.

At this transitional time, I continue to dispense the faithful from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass. For those pastors who would like to begin the celebration of Sunday Masses at an earlier time on Saturday, please contact the Chancellor of Spiritual Affairs.

The Sunday Mass from the Cathedral of St. Peter-in-Chains will for the time being continue to be broadcast on YourTV Peterborough and area, and the YouTube link will be made available on the website for the Diocese.

This will be a period of transition and adjustment as we begin the reopening process. My prayer is that our gratitude for the restoration of the worship life of our parishes will inspire openness to the changes we will each make for the common good.

I extend my sincere gratitude for all that you have done during this period of closure and for the effort you are taking to prepare and implement this new chapter in an unprecedented time.

We continue to remember in prayer those who have died of COVID-19, those who have suffered from this illness, those who care for them and indeed, all who minister and serve in this time of pandemic.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "† Daniel Miehm". The signature is written in a cursive style.

†Most Reverend Daniel J. Miehm
Bishop of Peterborough

†DJM/dlt