



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

May 6, 2021

Dear Father,

Re: Stop the Spike - Expanded Restrictions – effective May 5, 2021

As you have heard, we are dealing with expanded restrictions that affect the worshipping communities in our province. The restrictions will be in place for at least the next three weeks.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton will continue to respect and implement any restrictions set by the provincial government in its ongoing efforts to protect public health against the spread of the COVID-19 corona virus. Protecting the health and safety of our community and anyone in our churches and buildings is a serious responsibility we must all embrace. We look forward to the time when we can all worship together, in person. Respecting these restrictions will get our community to that point sooner rather than later.

In summary, the restrictions are as follows:

- Places of worship – Effective May 5
 - Faith services are limited to in-person attendance of 15 people.
- Funerals – Effective May 5
 - No more than 10 people can attend funeral services, including participants and guests.
- Working from home – Effective May 5
 - Working from home remains mandatory unless the employer requires the employee's physical presence to operate effectively.
 - Where at work for operational effectiveness, employees must mask for all indoor settings, except in work stations or where two-metre physical distancing or adequate physical barriers are in place.

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To promote consistency and hopefully avoid as much confusion as possible, these restrictions will be in effect in all parishes of the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton regardless of regions and number of cases in regions.

In setting these guidelines, and in consultation with Alberta Bishops, we have taken into consideration the following:

- These restrictions are in place for a three-week time frame, and may be extended depending on the situation in the province
- We do not wish to add additional complexity or instructions to parishes – especially now

In light of the above, I believe that the best approach is simply to maintain the status quo (combination livestream and in-person mass) for the next three weeks. I am instructing the pastor to discern with his trusted advisors and parish community how best to adapt to the new limit of fifteen people.

During this three-week period, the provincial Liturgical Task Force will be convened to determine additional possibilities should these stricter regulations remain in place beyond the three weeks, with those possibilities communicated in due course as necessary.

As I have indicated previously, and repeatedly over the last year, please let me take this opportunity to thank you, Father, for your continued leadership through this very long year. We know that you are doing a lot, and yet we continue to expect more. The new restrictions, while unexpected, are required, given the rapid spike in the COVID numbers in the province. I have no doubt that these new restrictions will bring about uncertainty and further questions. Please be patient with the situation, one another, and our parishioners.

Yours sincerely in Christ,



✠Richard W. Smith
Archbishop of Edmonton

c.: Parish Staff



The Catholic
Archdiocese
of **Edmonton**

Guidelines – Effective May 5, 2021

Weekday and Sunday Mass

- In-person attendees limited to 15 people
- At this time, the interpretation is that the priest is not to be counted as one of the 15. All additional individuals in the parish are included in the 15. (We are seeking clarification if the 15 (or 10) includes priest/proclaimer safety).
- It is recommended that no music and/or cantoring at any of the masses take place in order to allow for more parishioners to be able to attend.
- Parishes are in the best position to determine how the 15 will be determined. We are suggesting that the most fair method may be the ‘first come, first in’ method
- Parishes are strongly encouraged to continue to livestream masses

Funeral Mass

- 10- people maximum for funerals, including participants and guests
- We are not considering the priest and funeral directors in the number of 10 participants and guests
- Limit to 1 musician and 1 cantor
- Parishes are advised to contact the funeral home for assistance in sharing information with the family about these changes and to assist with managing attendance
- It is also recommended that the funeral director serve as the Point of Entry person/screener to manage guest and contact tracing
- Livestreaming is encouraged those relatives and friends unable to attend in person.

Weddings and Baptisms

- Weddings: 10 people maximum with existing AHS parameters
- Baptisms: may continue provided they adhere to existing AHS guidelines

Confirmation, First Communion

- Parishes with scheduled Confirmation Masses or First Communion masses this week (and at least the next two weeks) are encouraged to postpone should it be logistically impossible to accommodate the changes

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For any other scheduled parish activity (Confessions, Adoration etc.), the maximum of 15 people in the parish applies.

For further information and questions, please contact Fr Paul Kavanagh at 780-469-1010 Ext. 2153 or by email: Paul.Kavanagh@caedm.ca