



Code Red Alert COVID-19 Clarifications For Parishes

November 13, 2020

Foreword

Due to the recent surge of COVID-19 cases in Manitoba, the entire province is now under Code Red Alert as of November 12, 2020, up until at least December 11, 2020.

Therefore, the Archdiocese of Saint Boniface is issuing the following clarifications, having obtained updated information from the official government liaison to communities of faith during the COVID-19 pandemic, in coordination with the Archdiocese of Winnipeg and the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy of Winnipeg.

Clarifications

1) All Churches Are Closed to the Public

- All churches must be closed to the public while the current Code Red Alert is in effect.
- Parishes may conduct Masses so that they may be made available to the public over the Internet or through other remote means.
- Pastors are to continue to celebrate Mass privately, but with no one in attendance.

- “Closed to the public” means just that. No prayer services, Adoration, individual prayer, etc. may take place in churches. ALL faith-based gatherings such as RCIA, catechism, retreats, sacramental preparation sessions, Bible study, Lectio Divina and Faith Formation activities must be offered online.

2) Livestreaming / Broadcasting of Masses

- The livestreaming of Masses is permitted. Parish teams providing the service can be composed of more than five persons if needed, but within reason, while following all safety protocols.
- The doubling up of responsibilities (cantor, musician, lector, altar server, etc.) is highly recommended.

When livestreaming a Mass, please keep in mind that it is *essential* that the proper necessary public health measures are maintained.

3) Weddings, Funerals and Baptisms

- At present, weddings, funerals and baptisms are limited to *five people*, plus the celebrant.

Cohorts are no longer possible at this time.

Please note that the celebrant, as well as other persons assigned by the parish, such as a cantor or lector, are NOT to be counted among the five persons attending. In the case of funerals, staff from a funeral home are NOT to be counted.

4) Social Work and Health Care

- The premises of a place of worship may be used for the delivery of health care or social services. Therefore, donations for the poor, etc. may continue to be dropped off at parishes. If collecting and distributing foodstuffs for a food bank, curbside pickup using all safety precautions would be the best method.
- Parish drop-in centres, such as Bradbury Place at Holy Cross Parish, may continue to operate provided that they follow all safety protocols.

5) Parish Offices

- Parish offices may remain open, provided masks, social distancing, and sanitizing protocols are maintained.

Staff can still attend the workplace with proper social distancing, etc. Staff who are able to work from home are encouraged to do so. Managers are encouraged to work with their staff to find ways, wherever possible, to work from home.