



Office of the Bishop

COVID-19 and Other Reminders for Parishes

26 October 2021

Dear Pastors, Assoc. Pastors, and Parishioners,

Greetings in the Lord!

As the pandemic continues to linger, it is important that we don't lose focus in order to protect one another from the virus. It can be very easy to become casual, or let our vigilance wane, and to forget we are still living with a very contagious and virulent virus.

Please remember:

- Masks are an important means of protecting others from the virus and need to be worn properly, covering both the nose and the mouth. They are now required for those 5 years and up.
- Hand sanitizing is another important measure to reduce transmission of the virus from physical contact. It should be done by everyone upon entering and leaving the church and by priests and Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist before and after distribution of Holy Communion.
- Social distancing wherever possible keeps us safe especially if the virus should be present in the air.
- Those who are receiving Holy Communion on the tongue should receive after everyone else has received, or in a dedicated Communion line for reception on the tongue. Disinfectant/sanitizer should be used by priests and Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist between each communicant.
- The best way to end the pandemic and stop the spread of the virus is to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

On another note, a question has been raised about posture at Mass, specifically around kneeling and standing. For the sake of uniformity throughout the diocese in bodily postures, one should kneel after the Holy, Holy and then stand for the Mystery of Faith. After that, standing is the norm until after receiving Holy Communion when a person can either kneel or sit. Those whose health is compromised or for another reasonable cause, such as a knee replacement, do not have to kneel.

Additionally, we are pleased to welcome three new Permanent Deacons to the diocese. Deacon Peter d'Aoust and Deacon Dale Webster are assigned to the Penticton Parishes and Deacon Rod Attwell is assigned to Immaculate Conception parish.

As always, your continued cooperation and patience is appreciated during this time of pandemic.

May we all be kept safe, and may the pandemic soon end through the intercession of Our Lady of Monte Berico.

God bless you always.

Sincerely in Christ our Lord,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gregory J. Bittman', with a horizontal line extending to the left and a vertical line extending upwards from the middle of the signature.

✠ Gregory J Bittman
Bishop of Nelson