



# ARCHDIOCESE *of* KINGSTON

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Clergy, Parish and Pastoral Centre Staff  
**FROM:** Fr James Quirk, Chancellor of Spiritual Affairs  
**DATE:** 24 February 2022  
**SUBJECT:** Next Phase of Reopening on **1 March 2022**

If public health and health care indicators continue to improve, the following public health and workplace safety measures will come into effect on 1 March 2022:

- Capacity limits removed in all indoor public settings.
- Proof of vaccination requirements lifted.
- Face masks will still be required in indoor settings (including at Mass), except for those with medical exemptions.
- Passive screening continues through the use of signage at entrances, at bathrooms etc.
- Public health units can deploy local and regional responses based on local health indicators.

Therefore, in accordance with the public health and workplace safety measures,

- **Churches may open at full capacity.**
- **Masks are to be worn** by those attending Mass, visiting or working at parish offices and attending indoor meetings or events on church property.
- Contact tracing lists are **no longer** required.
- **Signage relating to mask wearing and self-screening should remain in use at this time.** It may be wise to keep in place other health and hygiene related signage currently in use.
- **Mass attendees should self-screen** for any symptoms prior to their arrival at the church.
- Ushers may be useful to assist with helping parishioners with seating and traffic flow to maintain comfortable distancing whenever possible.
- **Hand sanitizer should continue to be available for parishioner use and comfort**, but the spraying of hand sanitizer by volunteers, as parishioners enter the church, is not necessary.
- Air circulation should continue to be enhanced.
- As previously noted, enhanced cleaning protocols are no longer required.

Furthermore,

- As of the writing of this memorandum, **the Holy See continues to advise that ashes be sprinkled on Ash Wednesday**. Last year's instruction from the CDW required the silent imposition of ashes but that is not necessary this year.
- **Communion in the hand remains highly encouraged at this time.** Those who wish to receive on the tongue should ideally receive at the end of the communion line.
- **Communion from the cup is not permitted at this time.**
- **The Sign of Peace through the shaking of hands is discouraged.** It may be more appropriate to resume the shaking of hands when masks are no longer required, and parishioners are more comfortable.
- **Use of holy water fonts is permissible.**
- **Parishes may resume the use of Extraordinary Eucharistic ministers, lectors and altar servers** (with attention to distancing wherever possible).
- **Congregational singing is permissible.**
- **Choirs may resume with masks in place and Cantors may continue to be unmasked if a 3-metre distance from others is maintained.**
- **Minimal contact offertory collection is encouraged** by ushers extending their baskets or by placement of the collection baskets at the doors. Passing the collection basket from person to person is discouraged.
- **Children's liturgy, if resumed, needs to include mandatory masking** for the children due to the emphasis on safety.
- **Hymnals, prayer cards, etc. may be placed in the pews.**
- After two years of living with pandemic restrictions it may take time before all of our parishioners will feel comfortable about returning to Mass in person. For this reason, the **obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days remains in suspension at this time.**

Finally, after two years of COVID-19 warnings that have left many people in our society concerned about the removal of these public health restrictions and anxious at the thought of closer contact with others, you are encouraged to proceed in a measured and careful fashion that acknowledges and is sensitive to your parishioners.