



MEMORANDUM

TO: Clergy, Parish and Pastoral Centre Staff

FROM: Fr James Quirk, Chancellor of Spiritual Affairs

DATE: 9 March 2022

SUBJECT: **NEXT PHASE OF REOPENING
21 MARCH 2022**

Earlier today, it was announced by the Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr Kieran Moore, that on 21 March 2022:

- Mandatory masking requirements will be removed in most settings - except public transit, long-term care and retirement homes, health-care settings, congregate care settings, shelters and jails.
- Regulatory requirements for businesses that were still in place come to an end, including passive screening and the need to have a COVID-19 safety plan.

After two years of health measures that have encouraged caution, it continues to be important that our churches open up in a way that is sensitive to the concerns of parishioners, however, as of 21 March 2022:

- **Mask wearing will be voluntary** at Mass
- **Mask wearing will be voluntary** when visiting or working at parish offices and while attending indoor meetings or events on church property
- It may be wise to keep in place health and hygiene related signage, including those relating to self-screening, but they are **no longer mandated by the province**.
- The WorshipSafe guidelines, and the parish COVID-19 safety plan, can be set aside although parishes should consider which good hygiene practices they will want to continue.
- Parishes can reintroduce the serving of food and drinks at parish functions, receptions, and other events.

Finally, the use of confessionals in churches can be reintroduced as soon as priests and penitents are comfortable.

Fraternally,

Fr. James

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