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# St. BERNARD'S PARISH

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**“To Serve and Love God’s Church and His Holy People with Compassion, Joy and Truth”**

May 27, 2020

My dear parishioners,

Following yesterday’s announcement from Bishop William McGrattan to our local Roman Catholic diocese, with gladness I extend the news that we will soon be able to resume public celebration of the Holy Mass in our parish!

With this gladness comes an acute awareness of the scope of preparation needed to be ready to welcome you back to the Eucharist. That welcome is very warm, carrying with it a prescribed level of precaution and diligence to guard the wellbeing of all who gather. These preparations must be completed for us to be ready to open the doors for public Mass.

Initially, during this first phase of gathering, there is a maximum limit of 50 people able to attend at one time; this maximum is a general limit that has been set by the provincial government. Because of the size of our two churches, our local limit may need to be a smaller total, to ensure the required 2 metre distancing between households. We will strive to allow as many people as is safely feasible to attend each Mass.

A pre-registration system will be in place to manage the attendance for Mass. This will help ensure the compliance to safety directives, but also reduce the difficulty of needing to be turned away once our capacity has been reached. More detail on how that system will operate is yet to come. As health and safety measures are continually being reassessed, the situation and our parish plans will remain fluid and are subject to change. For this reason, it is important to remain patient, flexible, and also to check for news regularly with the parish. We are committed to providing prompt and accurate communication of changes concerning these directives, and our local parish plans.

For the time being, the Mass will continue to be available online – in the same ways as you have become familiar with, and my Sunday homilies will also continue to be posted on our parish website. Please be assured that Bishop McGrattan maintains the dispensation from attending Sunday Mass in person until further notice. This can give you the comfort to continue to care for yourself at home as needed. Please know that we are here for you – through community-connection and practical help if needed; do not hesitate to contact us.

**Please continue to check back often to the parish website ([www.stbernardsparish.ca](http://www.stbernardsparish.ca)) for updates and news about the upcoming times for public Mass. You are also encouraged to join our parish grapevine – please share this letter and future news with our parishioners through your own network of contacts, by phone or email, etc.**

With great anticipation of our reunion at the Holy Altar, I am yours in Christ,

Fr. Matthew Emmelkamp

Pastor  
St. Bernard’s Parish