



ARCHDIOCESE OF
Gatineau

PROTOCOL

**CONCERNING THE DECONFINEMENT
OF WORSHIP SPACES
IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF GATINEAU**

PHASE VII – Green Zone

July 2021

The modifications incorporated in this seventh phase are highlighted in yellow. Certain abolished rules have been maintained in the text while being stroked out in order that these changes be noticed.

INTRODUCTION

In order to successfully implement this protocol, each parish has established a small deconfinement coordination committee which includes at least the parish priest, a member of the fabrique assembly and a member of the liturgical committee.

It is the committee's responsibility to:

- Follow the emergency directives concerning maximum attendance according to the emergency level in our region:

	Red Level	Orange Level	Yellow Level	Green Level
	Maximum	Maximum	Maximum	Maximum
Celebrations	25	100	250	250
Funerals Weddings Baptisms	25	25	50	250
	People involved in making the celebration happen are not counted in these totals. These maximum numbers apply to the whole building, not to individual halls.			

- Ensure that directives concerning safety measures are followed:

	RedLevel	Orange Level	Yellow Level	Green Level
Attendance register	YES	NO – For regular celebrations YES – For weddings and funerals, thought a book of condolences (funerals) or a guest list (weddings) can replace it		
Masks	YES A procedural mask must be worn during the whole celebration. Members of the assembly can only remove them for communion.	OUI A procedural mask must be worn during the whole celebration. Members of the assembly can only remove them for communion.	YES A procedural mask or other face covering must be worn. It can be removed once the person is at their place, remains silent or speaks very softly.	YES A procedural mask or other face covering must be worn. It can be removed once the person is at their place, remains silent or speaks very softly.
Distancing	A minimum distance of two metres must always be maintained between people gathered in worship spaces, even when they remain at their seats and do not circulate, unless they share a common dwelling.			The minimum distance to be maintained is one metre, following the same conditions.

- Assign the required tasks to members of parish staff and parish volunteers;
- Regularly evaluate the implementation of the directives.

Part A

GENERAL DIRECTIVES FOR ALL CELEBRATIONS

1. PREPARING THE PREMISES

- 1.1. Post notices clearly at church entrances, indicating the maximum number of people who can attend the same celebration and explaining the procedures to be follow once inside and the health regulations in effect (distancing of **one metre**, mandatory use of procedural masks, respiratory hygiene).
 - 1.1.1. The poster prepared by the CNESSST and distributed by the diocese **MUST** be posted in French at all entrances. Its translation into English or Portuguese should also be posted, according to the circumstance.
- 1.2. Clean all surfaces that people habitually touch in church at least once a day when a celebration has been held: pews, railings and all other surfaces that could spread the virus. There is no need to clean if no other celebration will be held for three days.
- 1.3. Remove all booklets for communal use and rely upon single-use documents, screens or other solutions that do not require physically sharing documents.
- 1.4. Make the following available for volunteers and staff: disposable gloves, procedural masks, disinfecting wipes
- 1.5. Make disposable tissues available in the sacristy, the sanctuary and church entrances; provide deep, uncovered waste baskets for tissue disposal.
- 1.6. Hand sanitizer:
 - 1.6.1. Prepare disinfection stations at each entrance to the church entrance or to rooms that are used by the parishioners or other groups.
 - 1.6.2. Require people to use the hand sanitizer upon entering and exiting.
 - 1.6.3. Recommend that parishioners purchase hand sanitizer for themselves and for their families.
- 1.7. Empty holy water and baptismal fountains.
- 1.8. Paths:
 - 1.8.1. **Indicate the directions to be followed outside (if possible) and inside the church, both for arriving and departing (with arrows). If possible, identify different aisles for entering and exiting.**

- 1.8.2. In places where parishioners might be standing in line (ex: confessional, Communion, washrooms), indicate the one-metre distance to be observed.
- 1.9. Clearly indicate where people can sit in the church: each place must be at least one metre from another, in all directions, except for places reserved for members of the same household.
- 1.10. If possible, differentiate between entrance and exit aisles.

2. PREPARING MATERIALS

- 2.1. No missals or hymnals can be shared by parishioners: only single-use documents may be used.
- ~~2.2. Provide a lectern and microphone to be used only by the lector.~~
- ~~2.3. Each lector must use his or her own book.~~
- 2.4. Provide a lectern and microphone to be used only by the cantor if he or she is in the sanctuary. This set-up must be two metres from both the ambo and the altar, the organist and the assembly. If more than one person is leading the singing or a choir is present, each singer must be two metres distant from the others.
- 2.5. Holy water fonts and reservoirs must remain empty.
- 2.6. Before and after each liturgical celebration, wash all sacred vessels and other liturgical objects to be used with water and soap. Carefully wash all altar linens or accessory cloth items after each celebration.
- 2.7. Concerning Sunday collections:
- 2.7.1. Encourage parishioners to use the diocesan website for online giving.
 - 2.7.2. **Suggestion:** Place baskets at the exits, guarded by volunteers, to collect parishioners' weekly offerings.
 - 2.7.3. Money collected at the end of mass must be counted in a location other than the sacristy. Those charged with this task must wear gloves, deposit the sorted and counted money into an airtight sealed bag. The gloves must be discarded and their hands must be thoroughly washed with soap and water.

3. PRIESTS AND OTHER LITURGICAL MINISTERS.

- 3.1. The parish priest is responsible for guaranteeing that the instructions and directives given by the Archdiocese are observed.
- 3.2. Parishes are encouraged to collaborate with their neighbors to coordinate pastoral services in their area.
- 3.3. A priest who is suffering from any type of respiratory infection must avoid liturgical celebrations with the public or administering the sacraments during that period.

- 3.4. Any liturgical minister or volunteer who has had extended contact with someone infected with COVID-19 must self-isolate for 14 days.
- 3.5. Wear a procedural mask whenever you move about the congregation.
- 3.6. Priests and other liturgical ministers will wash their hands upon entering the sacristy and immediately before and after each celebration.
- 3.7. The presiding priest and other ministers will maintain a two-metre distance from each other.
- 3.8. During the celebration, the church sanctuary is off limits to anyone who does not have a liturgical function.
- 3.9. No choirs are allowed. (Cf. 2.4)

4. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE FAITHFUL

- 4.1. In cases where people have any type of health concerns, they are exempt from the obligation to assist at Sunday Mass during this period, as are all those over the age of 65 at all times.
- 4.2. Anyone who has had extended contact with a person infected with COVID-19 must self-isolate for 14 days.
- 4.3. Anyone exhibiting flu symptoms must remain at home.
- 4.4. Arrive 10-15 minutes before celebrations to avoid too many people entering the church at the same time.
- 4.5. Accept that there is a limit imposed on the number of people allowed to gather for a celebration in the church. Once this limit is reached, they will have to return another time. They can request that a place be reserved for them for a future celebration.
- 4.6. Disinfect your hands upon entering the church.
- 4.7. If you are over twelve years old, *wear a mask*.
- 4.8. Be vigilant and respectful of physical-distancing rules at all times (one metre).
- 4.9. Concerning families and couples:
 - 4.9.1. These are exempt from physical distancing measures among themselves.
 - 4.9.2. Each member of a group will be counted individually in the calculation to determine the authorized total attendance at a celebration.
 - 4.9.3. Family members must respect physical distancing in their movements in and around the church and meeting rooms at all times.
- 4.10. Carefully listening to instruction given before and during the celebration.
- 4.11. Be aware that at Eucharistic celebrations, communion will only be given in the hand. No blessed bread will be shared with children.

- 4.12. Avoid singing in the assembly, unless you are two metres away from others and you are wearing a mask. Spoken responses should be low in volume.
- 4.13. Touch as few surfaces as possible.
- 4.14. Try to avoid using the washrooms in the church, unless it is an emergency. (If used, respect the hygienic and physical distancing instructions.)
- 4.15. At the end of Mass, follow directives inviting people closest to the doors to exit first, one pew at a time, respecting physical distancing.

5. VOLUNTEERS

- 5.1. Volunteers who do not feel well must stay home.
- 5.2. Anyone who has been in extended contact with a person infected with COVID-19 must self-isolate for 14 days.
- 5.3. If singers are to lead the assembly, they must maintain two metres distance from one another and from musicians. Singers and musicians must be at least two metres away from the congregation.
- 5.4. Someone must be named to co-ordinate disinfection of the church every day a celebration is held unless the church will be closed for three days. This includes pews, doors, door handles, washrooms and all other common surfaces.
- 5.5. Volunteers and ministers must disinfect their hands each time they use a microphone if others are to use it.
- 5.6. Responsibilities of greeters and ushers:
 - 5.6.1. Keep church doors open if the weather is clement, otherwise, wear gloves to open the doors for each parishioner.
 - 5.6.2. Invite parishioners to disinfect their hands as they come into the church.
 - 5.6.3. Make sure congregants are wearing a mask.
 - 5.6.4. Ensure congregants observe physical distancing directives.
 - 5.6.5. Facilitate seating arrangements in the pews;
 - 5.6.6. Limit the entrance of the faithful once church capacity has been reached.
 - 5.6.7. Direct circulation of people when leaving the church: one pew at a time, beginning with the pews that are closest to the exit in order to avoid crowds.
- 5.7. Volunteers must wear a procedural while doing their work.

PART B

SPECIFIC DIRECTIVES FOR VARIOUS LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

6. MASSES

6.1. In preparation for the celebration

6.1.1. Physical distance must be maintained in the sacristy as well as during the entrance and recessional processions.

~~6.1.2. Only the priest is to handle the Missal.~~

6.1.3. Provide hand sanitizer near the altar for the presider and the Eucharistic ministers.

6.1.4. Concelebrant must receive from their own paten. It is preferable that they also receive from their own chalice, though they can communicate by intinction in a second chalice or – if necessary – in the presider’s chalice before the latter drinks from it. Each concelebrant must be seated one metre away from anyone else.

~~6.1.5. The presider’s chalice and paten (and those of concelebrants, if necessary), ciboria, wine and water, all should be placed on a credence table near the altar, preferably on a serving tray.~~

6.1.6. Provide two corporals: one in front of the presider with his chalice and paten, and the other a little further away on the side, with the ciboria and other chalices, if necessary. They can be unfolded and placed on the altar before the celebration begins.

6.2. Entrance rites

6.2.1. The priest can welcome the faithful when they arrive for mass, preferably outside, while wearing his facemask and respecting the one-metre rule.

6.2.2. The priest and accompanying ministers can process through the assembly, keeping one metre between each other and the assembly. It would be best to process in a single file.

6.2.3. The presider bows to the altar and venerates it by kissing the corporal.

6.3. Liturgy of the Word

6.3.1. ~~One reader only will proclaim texts and make announcements. This must be done from a separate lectern and microphone, not from the ambo.~~ The readings and the prayers of the faithful should be proclaimed from the ambo while announcements should be read from another place. More than one person can participate in these readings.

- 6.3.2. The presider alone uses the ambo, proclaiming the Gospel and delivering the homily from there. He will avoid preaching in the aisle among the people, unless a space has been prepared that ensures a distance of two metres is maintained between the preacher and the faithful.

6.4. Eucharistic Liturgy

- 6.4.1. The gifts can be brought forward from the assembly. The faithful who bring the gifts forward and the ministers who assist should disinfect their hands before touching the gifts. They keep their facemasks on during the procession.
- 6.4.2. The presider disinfects his hands before approaching the gifts.
- 6.4.3. The presider places his paten and chalice on the corporal that is in front of him.
- 6.4.4. He places the ciboria (and other patens and chalices, if necessary) on a second corporal that is off to the side of the altar. These vessels should remain covered until the moment of communion.
- 6.4.5. The lavabo (washing of hands) must be made by the priest without assistance, at the credence table near the altar or at the side of the altar itself. A minister can assist the priest for the lavabo, but both priest and minister need to wear their facemasks.
- 6.4.6. The sign of peace is exchanged without movement of the people and without physical contact.

6.5. Communion rite

- 6.5.1. The presider consumes the entire host intended for him at the time of Communion without sharing it with anyone.
- 6.5.2. Only the presider partakes of his chalice. Concelebrants (if there are any) receive from their own patens and chalices on the second corporal. (But see 6.1.4)
- 6.5.3. If there is a deacon, he will only receive the Body of Christ unless a separate chalice has been prepared for him on the second corporal.
- 6.5.4. After having communicated, the presider puts on his mask, disinfects his hands and gives communion to any other ministers of communion.
- 6.5.5. Communion will be offered in silence, without the customary dialogue between communicant and minister.
- 6.5.6. It is forbidden to receive Communion in a pyx for another person, whether they are in the church or at home.
- 6.5.7. As much as possible, crowd movements are to be avoided. The priest and other ministers of communion will go to the

faithful who will remain at their places. They can pass between the pews to give communion to those who are not seated along an aisle. Otherwise, the faithful will move forward one pew at a time, following the directions given by volunteers, keeping **one meter** distance between themselves.

6.5.8. Holy Communion will be given in the hand only. It must not be given nor received while wearing gloves.

6.5.9. If the priest or minister feels that his fingers have been touched the hands of one of the faithful, he must stop, place the ciborium on the corporal and disinfect his hands. He will repeat this process as often as necessary during the distribution of Communion.

6.5.10. Little pieces of bread will not be given to the children, as is the custom in some parishes. Ministers may bless them without touching them.

6.5.11. Vessels will be set aside on the credence table and purified in the sacristy after Mass.

6.5.12. The priest can meet the faithful at the end of mass, preferably outside, while keeping his face mask on and observing the one-metre rule.

7. FUNERALS

7.1. In preparation for the celebration

7.1.1. Before and after the ceremony: disinfect the censor and its stand, the container holding the incense, the holy water vessel and sprinkler, the processional cross and the paschal candle if they are to be used, as well as the funeral trolley used to conduct the casket or the table and cloth where the urn will be placed.

7.1.2. The censor with its stand, the container holding the incense and the holy water vessel and sprinkler (or water jar) are to be placed by the altar before the beginning of the celebration.

7.1.3. For funerals where the casket is present, the arrival and departure of the hearse must be done in a way that respects the physical distancing measures both for the funeral home employees among themselves as well as for those gathered for the celebration.

7.2. Please note

7.2.1. A family may receive condolences before the celebration, as long as the limit of 50 persons in the church is never exceeded. Once the limit of 50 persons is attained, a rotation can be established

by inviting those who have presented their condolences to leave so as to allow others to enter. A moment of transition between condolences and the beginning of the celebration should be observed to allow participants to take their places.

7.2.2. A book of condolences can replace the attendance register at these celebrations. However, if there is no such book, a register must be kept, containing names and contact information of all participants.

7.3. Opening rites

7.3.1. The priest can receive the body or the ashes at the door of the church.

7.3.2. The one-metre rule is to be observed between the ministers during the entrance procession.

7.3.3. The presider will conduct the welcoming rites from his chair, taking care to connect with family members with his eyes and his words.

7.3.4. In case a member of the family wishes to present the deceased to the congregation, they should use the microphone reserved for announcements.

7.4. Rite of final commendation

7.4.1. The presider sprinkles holy water and incenses the remains while keeping the prescribed one-meter distance from the assembly. In restricted spaces, do not circle the coffin but stand in front of it to sprinkle holy water and to incense.

7.4.2. Family members do not participate in liturgical gestures such as sprinkling of holy water or incensing the coffin, nor do they sign the parish register.

7.4.3. All announcements are to be made by the presider.

7.4.4. ~~The recessional procession will proceed directly to the sacristy.~~
The priest and accompanying ministers can participate in the recessional procession, observing the one-metre rule.

7.4.5. Members of the assembly must also observe physical distancing.

8. CHILDREN'S BAPTISM

8.1. In preparation for the celebration

8.1.1. Provide cotton balls for the anointing with chrism.

8.1.2. Provide a clean towel to dry the child after affusion (the pouring of water on the head).

- 8.1.3. Wash the baptismal font and shell, the container for the chrism, the foot of the Easter candle and the box containing the baptismal candle.
- 8.1.4. Pour fresh water into the baptismal font (for each baptism).
- 8.1.5. Near the baptismal font, provide a small table on which will be placed the towel, the chrism and the cotton balls.
- 8.1.6. On another table near the Easter candle, place the baptismal candle and its box.

8.2. Please note

- 8.2.1. The maximum number of faithful allowed is the same as at other celebrations.
- 8.2.2. The faithful will head directly to their pews as they arrive: the rite of welcome will not be celebrated at the door of the church.
- ~~8.2.3. A register must be kept, containing the names of all participants for these celebrations.~~
- 8.2.4. There is no limit on the number of families that can be welcomed for a baptism celebration.
- 8.2.5. As much as possible, only the parents should hold the child in their arms while in church.
- 8.2.6. The minister of baptism must always maintain one metre distance with other participants. He should approach the child only for the laying of hands, the affusion and the anointing. He will wear a mask at these moments.

8.3. The celebration.

- 8.3.1. Only the parents are to trace the sign of the Cross on the child's forehead, upon the minister's invitation. The latter does not do this himself.
- 8.3.2. For laying on of hands, the minister wears a mask.
- 8.3.3. The affusion is done as usual, though the godparents will remain one metre away from the parents. The minister wears a mask at this time.
- 8.3.4. To anoint with holy chrism, the minister will use cotton balls so as to avoid touching the child. The minister wears a mask at this time, also.
- 8.3.5. No white garment is to be imposed on the child. Rather, the minister will underline the festive garment that the child is already wearing and adjust the prayer if necessary.
- 8.3.6. One of the godparents (or both, if they are from the same household) will take up the baptismal candle from the table and light it to the Easter candle.

- 8.3.7. The child is not to be laid upon the altar for the Our Father (as is done in some parishes) but remains in his or her parents' arms.

8.4. After the celebration

- 8.4.1. Photos can only be taken while respecting the two-meter rule, both by the photographer and those being photographed.
- 8.4.2. All liturgical objects used during the celebration must be cleaned.

9. WEDDINGS

9.1. In preparation for the celebration

- 9.1.1. Clean the prie-Dieux and chairs for the spouses, the chairs for the witnesses, the table for the rings and another for civil documents as well as the holy water pot and the sprinkler.

9.2. Please note

- 9.2.1. The maximum number of faithful allowed at a wedding is the same as for all other celebrations.
- 9.2.2. The faithful will head directly to their pews as they arrive. People will not gather at the entrance of the church.
- 9.2.3. The guest list can serve as a register of attendance. If no such list is available, an attendance register must be kept.

9.3. Opening rite

- 9.3.1. Before and during the procession, the one-metre rule must be observed by the spouses, the witnesses, the parents and the bridal party.
- ~~9.3.2. Bridesmaids and grooms should not be part of the procession.~~
- 9.3.3. The minister will wait in the sanctuary and remain there for the whole celebration. He will endeavour to connect with the bridal party through his eyes and words even while remaining at the presider's chair.
- 9.3.4. If there is to be an intervention by a member of the assembly, they should use the microphone reserved for announcements. Alternatively, a text can be prepared by the spouses and entrusted to the minister who will integrate it in his own interventions at the opening, in this homily or in the dismissal.

9.4. Rite of marriage

- 9.4.1. The minister will keep at least **one metre** distance from the spouses throughout the ceremony.
- 9.4.2. The rings should have been placed on a table near the spouses who will pick them up themselves after they have been blessed in order to exchange them.
- 9.4.3. The spouses can exchange the traditional kiss. However, congratulations are not to be exchanged with members of the assembly with kisses or handshakes.

9.5. Rite of dismissal

- 9.5.1. While signing civil documents, the **one**-metre rule will be observed.
- 9.5.2. Each signatory should use his or her own pen, when possible.
- 9.5.3. No group pictures should take place during the signing.
- 9.5.4. All announcements are to be made by the minister.

9.6. After the celebration

- 9.6.1. The **one**-meter rule must be observed in all photos taken in the church or on church property.
- 9.6.2. Disinfect all items used during the celebration before putting them away.
- 9.6.3. **A reception for a maximum of 25 people can be held after the marriage in an interior hall of the church.**

10. SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

- 10.1. Community celebration of reconciliation will be avoided during this phase.
- 10.2. Both the penitent and the priest should wear masks.
- 10.3. Confessionals and reconciliation rooms that cannot permit two chairs to be separated by **one metre** are not to be used.
- 10.4. Prepare a room or space in the church that can permit both discretion and the observance of physical distancing.
- 10.5. Dispose the chairs **one metre** from each other, not facing each but sideways. These chairs should not have arm-rests, to facilitate disinfection after each use.
- 10.6. Prepare a waiting space for penitents that provides for the observance of physical distancing.
- 10.7. Physical contact will be avoided at all times, particularly during the laying on of hands.
- 10.8. After each penitent has left, disinfect the door handle if an enclosed room is used.

11. ANOINTING OF THE SICK.

- 11.1. Community celebration of the anointing of the sick can be held, following the usual directives.
- 11.2. If the celebration takes place in a public institution, permission must be sought from the director of care and their directives closely followed.
- 11.3. The priest will disinfect his hands before beginning the celebration.
- 11.4. He will wear a mask in the presence of the person to be anointed.
- 11.5. As much as possible, he will keep one metre distance between himself and the sick person, as well as with any participants.
- 11.6. The actual anointing will be done with a cotton ball in order to avoid direct contact with the person receiving the sacrament. A new cotton ball will be used for each celebration.
- 11.7. The minister will avoid all physical contact with the people present for the sacrament, including the one being anointed.

12. COMMUNION OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

- 12.1. If communion is brought to a public residence, permission must be sought from the director of care and their directives closely followed.
- 12.2. The pyx must be thoroughly cleaned with water and soap before and after each use.
- 12.3. Only one host should be deposited into the pyx.
- 12.4. A Eucharistic minister should bring communion to only one person a day.
- 12.5. The minister will disinfect his or her hands before beginning the celebration.
- 12.6. The minister will wear a mask while being in the space occupied by the communicant.
- 12.7. The minister will only give communion in the hand.
- 12.8. The minister will avoid all physical contact and maintain physical distancing with the people present for the sacrament, limiting his or her time in the residence.
- 12.9. A pastoral dialogue is frequently part of this ministry: it would be advisable to maintain this practice through a phone conversation before or after bringing communion.

13. VARIOUS RULES FOR YELLOW AND GREEN ZONES

- 13.1. Open air masses can be held, but the rules established for worship spaces must be respected, most notably concerning maximum numbers of participants. If a tent is used for an outside celebration, the limit is

250 persons if no side walls are installed. As soon as side walls are installed, the limit is 50 persons.

- 13.2. Closed meetings of churchwardens are allowed. The room should be large enough to allow the 2 metre rule to be followed. No food is to be served, the public is not being present. Masks are to be worn at all times, except when speaking.
- 13.3. Parishioners' assemblies are allowed, but only in "conference mode", that is with the participants sitting in rows 2 metres for each other, wearing masks. The maximum number of participants is 250.
- 13.4. Knights of Columbus and similar groups can meet in the parish hall. The maximum is fixed at 50 members.
- 13.5. A meal can be served in the parish hall, but not buffet style. Either people are served at their tables, or individual box-lunches are handed out that contain all utensils and drinks. Restaurant rules must be followed concerning distances between tables and number of people at tables. The maximum is set at 25 people.
- 13.6. Coffee can be served after masses, though not in self-serve mode: coffee, cream, sugar and stir sticks must be prepared by volunteers. If the event is held inside, the limit is set at 25 people; if it is outside, 50 people can participate.