



**Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon**  
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May 8, 2020  
Friday of the 4<sup>th</sup> Week of Easter

**Update re: Phased-In Schedule for Parishes**

**Dear Clergy, Parish Life Directors, Parishes of the Diocese of Saskatoon:**

**Announced COVID 19 Phased-In Schedule and Religious Gatherings:** Further to my message of May 1, 2020, on Tuesday May 12 of this coming week the Presbyteral Council and the College of Consultors are meeting to review a draft plan for phasing-in activities for parishes of our Diocese. The plan fulfills the criteria as set out by the Saskatchewan Government, titled “Re-Open Saskatchewan.” The plan features a gradual resumption of activities and emphasizes small gatherings and appropriate personal distancing. It also features a carefully laid out plan for clergy to distribute Holy Communion to the limited numbers that would be permitted for the celebration of Mass.

We will also be discussing the features of the current approach by our Diocese to the Federal Government wage subsidy program, which was to end on June 6, 2020. Earlier today the prime minister announced the extension of this program, indicating that further details will be outlined next week. This is good news for our parishes, as several were beginning to plan the difficult issue of ‘temporary layoffs’ of parish employees, given the great downturn in income. While the extension of the wage subsidy program is good news, it would be prudent for our Diocese to begin to discuss longer term ramifications of the COVID 19 crisis on our parishes. This will also be discussed at the Tuesday meeting.

Finally, please note that yesterday the Bishops of Saskatchewan joined with other religious leaders in the province in an extraordinary meeting regarding how faith organizations can better represent themselves to our Provincial Government. The lack of recognition of religious organizations in the government’s “Re-Open Saskatchewan” plan has been the occasion for this initiative. I look forward to seeing how this develops.

Finally, on this Friday of fast and prayer for the end of the pandemic - and for the protection of health care workers and other service providers - we pray, *Sacred Heart of Jesus, pray for us and all the world.*

Sincerely in Christ,

✠ Most Rev. Mark A. Hagemoen