

COMMUNIQUÉ No. 12 — May 15, 2020
INFORMATION
to Pastors, Parish Pastoral Teams and Religious Congregations

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Very soon it is expected that public-health authorities will issue the green light allowing places of worship to welcome the public on a gradual basis.

A. In order to be well prepared, we urge you to review the diocesan *Guide* prepared for this purpose, found here:

https://www.diocesemontreal.org/sites/default/files/ressources/ressources_paroisses/personnel_patorial/deconfinement-COVID-19/COVID_Guide_eng_11%20june%202020.pdf.

For your benefit, two webinars are being offered to present the *Guide*; the first will take place on **Tuesday, June 16, from 2 p.m. to 3:30 (in French)** and on **Wednesday, June 17, from 10 a.m. to 11:30 (in English)**. There is still time to register via the following link: <https://bit.ly/2XN4LCb>. Once registered, an invitation will be sent to you to access the virtual meeting room via the cloud platform *Zoom*. You may also submit your questions or comments by email at any time, directly to: deconfinement@diocesemontreal.org.

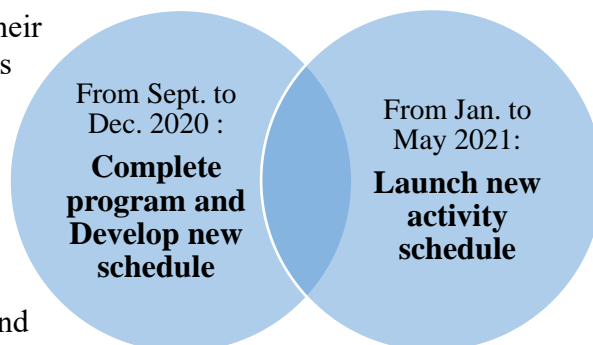
B. We would also like to remind you of the **survey** sent out by the **Department of Administrative Services to Fabriques** to help us better assess your needs vis-à-vis parish development. We urge you to complete it by June 19, 2020 the latest, using the following the link: <https://microsites.diocesemontreal.org/microsites/servicesfabriques/survey/?lang=en> or by visiting the Department of Administrative Services to Fabriques website at: <http://www.servicesfabriques.org/>.

C. In Communiqué No. 9, dated May 12, 2020, I informed you that the Archbishop, together with his diocesan councils and in dialogue with the different pastoral regions, was developing various realistic scenarios, adapted to different local situations regarding the **resumption of pastoral activities in Autumn 2020 and for the Winter/Spring of 2021**. At this point, I would like to share with you **three key principles** to help guide you in planning to resume pastoral activities. What follows addresses more particularly catechetical programs and the celebration of the sacraments of Christian initiation; however, these principles also apply to other activities regarding your community.

1. **Inclusion, accompaniment and mobilization**: Some families are ready to resume participation in parish activities in the fall; others less so. It is important not to neglect those families who are not ready as yet to participate in that way. The involvement of as many people as possible is crucial given these extraordinary circumstances. We encourage you to consult them in developing your recommencement plan and to adapt catechetical activities and liturgical celebrations to address their apprehensions and provide reassurance.

2. **Flexibility**: Given the challenges of “deconfinement,” use the Fall of 2020 (September to December) **to complete your 2019-20 program and to develop a new activity schedule for**

Winter-Spring of 2021; then, if appropriate, **launch and conduct these activities in a new cycle** that will run from January to May 2021. For example: Parishes that have suspended all or part of their catechetical activities are encouraged to employ this proposed way of proceeding. On the other hand, parishes that have maintained an active program throughout Spring 2020 and who consider themselves adequately prepared to start the new catechetical year 2020-21 in the Autumn can do so, taking into account, however, all the key principles outlined here, especially those of inclusion and accompaniment of families.



- a) **Adaptation:** The Archbishop will grant extraordinary delegation to pastors empowering them to celebrate the **Sacrament of Confirmation** in order to provide parishes with as much leeway as possible to ensure their celebrations conform to the “deconfinement” protocols. However, the usual delegated ministers of this sacrament will remain available to support the pastors. This arrangement applies to all confirmations of children and adults that have been postponed due to the pandemic. A decree will be promulgated to this effect, and you will be informed of the provisions (effective date, time period, etc.) in due course. At a later date, you will be notified regarding arrangements for the regular confirmation schedule for Spring 2021.
- b) **Creativity:** The period of confinement spurred the development of new ways of “being” and “building” Church, i.e. through online sessions, virtual meetings, webinars, and more. We encourage pastoral teams, during this period of adaptation to new realities, to develop online initiatives and to operate on a project-by-project basis, initiating new practices that could help in the long-term. We recommend, however, that you especially keep in mind those individuals and families who do not have Internet access and demonstrate a capacity to adapt by presenting hybrid models (virtual and physical) of communication according to the various approaches taken.
3. **Simplicity:** For Christian initiation, we invite you to consider streamlining the content of your catechesis and immediate preparation for the sacraments. Several options are possible:
 - a) Begin the new pastoral year with Advent and follow the liturgical calendar with a simplified catechetical approach.
 - b) If you plan, instead, to begin the catechetical program in January 2021, a "condensed" catechetical journey, i.e. one centred on the core elements and rich in opportunities to learn through experience, can also be considered an option, taking into account the needs of families and the capacity for pastoral accompaniment.
 - c) The celebration of the sacraments of Christian initiation can also take place during Sunday Mass.
 - d) Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA): We will soon be sending you practical diocesan guidelines for completing the third stage of the RCIA and celebrating the sacraments of



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Christian initiation in Ordinary Time. In addition, the Office de la catéchèse du Québec (OCQ) is currently working on two projects on an inter-diocesan level to assist parish teams:

- i. An approach to proceed through the third stage of the RCIA and to celebrate the sacraments of Christian initiation in Ordinary Time;
- ii. A catechetical approach using virtual groups so that adults can proceed through the second stage of the RCIA.

Don't hesitate to contact members of the Faith Education Office; they are available to help support and work with you. Pascale Haddad, Director, can be reached at 514-925-4300 (#255) or by email phaddad@diocesemontreal.org.

D. Liturgical celebrations:

1) Broadcasting and/or recording:

During this period in which public worship has been restricted by public-health authorities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many parishes began to livestream and/or record liturgical celebrations and broadcast them online through various social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Zoom, etc. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCC) Liturgy Office has provided [information](#) regarding the proper accreditation for liturgical music broadcast, respecting copyright laws and standards, as well as information on the specific measures that have been put in place for the use of liturgical texts during the pandemic. This information might be revised as the situation evolves.

2) Feast of the Sacred Heart: Friday, June 19, 2020

Archbishop Lépine will preside at a Mass at 8 a.m. on Friday, June 19, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, offered for those who have died since the beginning of the pandemic and for their families. The Mass will be celebrated “in camera” (privately) at Mary Queen of the World Cathedral and can be followed live on Salt + Light Television: <https://seletlumieretv.org>. On this day, wherever they are, priests are invited to celebrate this solemnity commending the deceased and the families affected by the pandemic to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

3) Feast of St. John the Baptist: June 24, 2020

Archbishop Lépine will preside at a Mass at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, June 24, the Solemnity of St. John the Baptist, our patron saint. As usual, during this time of confinement and until further notice, Mass will be celebrated “in camera” (privately) at Mary Queen of the World Cathedral. It will be broadcast live on Salt + Light Television: <https://seletlumieretv.org>.

Looking forward to sharing news with you very soon about the “deconfinement” of places of worship; I thank you for your patience and perseverance!

In the Risen Jesus,

+ Alain Faubert, VG
Auxiliary Bishop of Montréal